DARUSSALAM
RESEARCH SECTION



GUARDING THE TONGUE

DARUSSALAM

حِفْظُ اللِّسَانِ

Guarding the Tongue

from the book *Al-Adhkaar*

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Explanation of Symbols Used

A Muslim is encouraged to utter certain phrases at the mention of Allaah, His Messengers, His Angels, the *Sahaabah*, or other righteous Muslims. The phrases are presented below and the reader is advised to utter the complete phrase when he comes across any of these symbols or abbreviation:

Phrase	Mentioned With	Transliteration	Meaning
سبحانه وتعالى	Allaah's Name	*Subhaanahuu wa ta'aalaa*	Glorified and Exalted is He
ﷺ	Prophet Muhammad	*Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*	May the peace and blessing of Allaah be on him
عليه السلام	A Prophet or an Angel	*'Alayh is Salaam*	Peace be on him
رضي الله عنه	A companion	*Radiyallaahu 'anhu*	May Allaah be pleased with him
رضي الله عنهم	More than two companions	*Radiyalllaahu 'anhum*	May Allaah be pleased with them
رحمه الله	A past scholar or righteous Muslim	*Rahimahullaah*	May Allaah have Mercy on him
رضي الله عنها	A female companion	*Radiyallaahu 'anhaa*	May Allaah be pleased with her
عليهم الصلاة والسلام	Prophets or Angels	*'Alayhimus-Salaat wa-Salaam*	Peace be on them

Introduction

Naseehah (Advice) and its position in the Religion

All Praise is to Allaah, we praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evils of our souls and evils of our deeds. One whom Allaah guides none can lead him astray, and one whom He misguides, none can guide him. We bear witness that there is no god but Allaah, and We bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and His Messenger.

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا
تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ﴾

"O you who believe! Fear Allaah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islaam." [*Aal Imraan* (3): 102]

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Aadam), and from him (Aadam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allaah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allaah is Ever an All-Watcher over you." [*An-Nisaa'* (4): 1]

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُواْ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ○ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins.

And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger ﷺ he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise)." [*Al-Ahzaab* (33): 70-71]

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللهِ، وَخَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ

As for what follows:

Verily the most truthful speech is the Word of Allaah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him], and the worst of affairs are the newly-invented matters. Every newly-invented matter is an innovation, every innovation is a going astray and every going astray is in the Fire.[1]

Giving *Naseehah* Is A Characteristic of the Prophets

One of the major characteristics of the

[1] This is the famous *Khutbat Al-Haajah* which the Prophet ﷺ would recite whenever he was going to deliver a sermon, make a speech. See *'Khutbat Al-Haajah'* of Shaykh Muhammad Naasirudeen Al-Albaanee (Al-Maktab Al-Islaamee, Damascus, 1980) for its authentication and further details.

caller to Allaah – indeed, it should be a major characteristic of the believer – is that very important characteristic of giving advices. Being from the people of *Naseehah* or having the characteristic of being *'Naasih'* is something that Allaah has commanded this *Ummah* with. It is also one of the important characteristics that the Prophets came with.

Allaah informs us that when the people of Nooh ﷺ accused him of being upon misguidance and error with their saying:

﴿إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

"Verily, we see you in plain error." [*Al-'A'raaf* (7): 60];

he rejected that and responded that he was giving them sincere advice:

﴿قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى ضَلَٰلَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ○ أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنصَحُ لَكُمْ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"[Nooh (Noah)] said: "O my people! There is no error in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the 'Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists)! I convey unto you the Messages of my Lord and give sincere advice to you. And I know from Allaah what you know not." [*Al-A'raaf* (7): 61-62]

Similarly, Allaah ﷻ tells us that when Hud عليه السلام began to call to Allaah; his people referred to him as being upon 'foolishness':

﴿قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ
فِى سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْكَـٰذِبِينَ﴾

"The leaders of those who disbelieved among his people said: 'Verily, we see you in foolishness, and verily, we think you are one of the liars.'" [*Al-A'raaf* (7): 66];

so he retorted and said:

﴿قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَـٰكِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن
رَّبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ۝ أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَـٰلَـٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنَا۠ لَكُمْ
نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ﴾

"O my people! There is no foolishness in me, but (I am) a Messenger from the Lord of the 'Alameen **(mankind, jinns and all that exists)! I convey unto you the Messages of my Lord, and I am a trustworthy adviser (or well-wisher) for you."** [*Al-A'raaf* (7): 67-68]

So there is no doubt that the characteristic of giving advice for the sake of Allaah – that is the characteristic of being *'Naasih'* – is from the characteristics of the Prophets, just as it should be with the callers to Allaah and all of the believers. So this affair of *Naseehah* is

something, which is fundamental and a most important characteristic for every Muslim.

Jarir bin 'Abdullah ﷺ said: *"Amma B'adu* (now then), I went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'I give my pledge of allegiance to you for Islaam.' The Prophet ﷺ conditioned (my pledge) for me to be sincere and true to every Muslim so I gave my pledge to him for this. By the Lord of this mosque! I am sincere and true to you (Muslims)."[2]

Also, Tamim Ad-Dari narrated: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said three times:

الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ

"The religion is Naseehah (*sincere advice*)." *(Ad-Deen' Naseehah)*

The people asked, "To whom?" The Prophet ﷺ replied:

قَالَ: لله وَلِكِتَابِهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ مِثْلُهُ وَلِأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ

"To Allaah and to His Book and to His Messenger and to the leaders of the Muslims and the common folk (*all the Muslims*)."[3]

[2] *Bukhaaree*

[3] *Muslim*

The Golden Advice Series

In response to the obligation of giving *Naseehah* and its obvious need in our *Ummah* at the present time, **DARUSSALAM PUBLICATIONS** has come up with **The Golden Advice Series** which was orginally published by Deen Communications Limited, Nigeria. This series will, *Insha Allaah*, contain several books; each of which is devoted to an advice given from the texts of Islaam (the Qur'aan and the *Sunnah*) with its explanation as provided by the esteemed scholars or people of knowledge. The advice range from the most important issue (*Tawheed* or worshipping Allaah alone), to morals and also issues of business transactions.

Each book comes in an easy-to-read size but the contents are highly beneficial, *Bi Ithnillaah*! In this first phase, ten pieces of advice have been treated. It is our hope that, *Insha Allaah,* more will be added in the days ahead. This book centers on the *Naseehah* of the Prophet ﷺ on **Guarding the Tongue!**

Everything that is correct in the books of **The Golden Advice Series** is from Allaah ﷻ – and to Him is all the praise; every mistake or error is from our imperfection and from *Shaytaan* – and we seek refuge in Allaah from him! We ask Allaah ﷻ to accept this effort of ours as an act done purely and sincerely for His Face and that He does not allow anyone or anything else

to have a share in it.

The end of our *Du'aa'* is that all praise is for Allaah, Lord of the worlds. And may His peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and those who follow him till the Day of Reckoning! *Aameen*.

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'Uqbah bin 'Aamir[4] ﷺ reported: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, how does one attain salvation?' He responded:

[4] 'Uqbah bin 'Aamir Al-Juhaanee ﷺ accepted Islaam on the day the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ arrived in Madeenah. He used to live far from the city, along with eleven others who had accepted Islaam, tending sheep and goats in the open country he decided to look after the flock of other colleagues while they go to learn from the Prophet ﷺ and would on their return learn from them.
One day he realised the opportunity he was missing by not being in the company of the Prophet ﷺ and learning directly from him. He left his flock and went straight to Madeenah to live in the Prophet's *Masjid* along with the *Ashaabus-Suffah*. Within a decade, he had become one of the outstanding scholars among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, a competent and beautiful reciter of the Qur'aan, a military commander and later on one of the eminent Muslim governors as Islam spread east and west with astonishing rapidity.
Two objectives occupied Uqbah's attention throughout his life; the search for knowledge and *Jihaad* in the path of God. He applied his energies totally to these objectives. In the field of *Jihaad*, it is sufficient to know that 'Uqbah fought beside the Prophet ﷺ at the Battle of Uhud and in all the military engagements thereafter.
'Uqbah was one of the commanders of the Muslim forces that liberated Egypt. For three years he was the Muslim governor of Egypt. In the field of learning, he drank deeply from the fountain of knowledge that was the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ. 'Uqbah became a distinguished *Qaaree* (reciter of the Qur'aan), a *Muhaddith* (recorder and narrator of the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ); a *Faqeeh* (jurist); an *Adeeb* (literati); a *Faseeh* (orator) and a *Shaa'ir* (poet).
'Uqbah bin 'Aamir Al-Juhanee, the *Qaaree*, the *'Aalim*, the *Ghaazee* (warrior), died in Cairo and was buried at the foot of the *Muqattam* hills.

أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ لِسَانَكَ وَلْيَسَعْكَ بَيْتُكَ وَابْكِ عَلَى خَطِيئَتِكَ

'Restrain your tongue, remain in your home and weep over your sins.'"[5]

"Guard your tongue O mankind

And do not let it bite you, for indeed it is a snake

How many people in the graveyards are there, who were killed by their tongues

Whoever fears meeting Him (on the Day of Judgement) is truly the brave one."[6]

[5] *Saheeh* – Reported by Ibn Al-Mubaarak in az-Zuhd (134) and from him Ahmad (5/259) and At-Tirmidhee (2517 of At-Tuhfah) from the path of 'Ubaydullaah bin Zuhr from 'Alee bin Yazeed. I say: Its chain of narration is very weak, because there are two defects in it. Firstly, 'Ubaydullaah bin Zuhr has weakness in him, and secondly, 'Alee bin Yazeed is very weak. However, Ahmad (4/148) reported it from the path of Mu'aadh bin Rifaa'ah on 'Alee bin Yazeed. So the first defect is uplifted because Mu'aadh is honest. Also, At-Tabaraanee (sec. 59) reported it from the path of Ibn Thawbaan from his father from Al-Qaasim from Abu Umaamah. Its chain is *Hasan*, so the second defect is removed.

[6] *Al-Usool Wa Al-Futuhaat Ar-Rabaaniyyah.*

Chapter 1

Guard Your Tongue

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ﴾

"Not a word does one utter, except that there is an (angel) watching, ready to record it." [*Qaaf* (50): 18]

And He ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ﴾

"Verily, your Lord is Ever-Watchful." [*Al-Fajr* (89): 14]

Know that every individual who falls under the category of being responsible for his actions (*Mukallaf*) must guard his tongue from all types of speech, except for that speech which consists

predominantly of some benefit.

So in the situation that speaking and refraining from speech are both found to contain the same amount of benefit within them, then the *Sunnah* is to refrain from it, altogether. This is because the allowable speech (equal in benefit and harm) paves the way towards that which is forbidden as well as disliked. Rather, in most cases, this will be the result, and applying safety, at that point, will not be able to soothe it in the least.

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«وَمَنْ كانَ يُؤْمِنُ باللهِ واليَوْمِ الآخرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيرًا أوْ لِيَصْمُتْ»

"Whosoever believes in Allaah and the Last Day, then let him speak good or remain silent."[7]

This *Hadeeth* is a clear-cut proof that one should not talk, unless his speech is good – and that is the speech that consists predominantly of benefit. So if one has doubt as to whether or not his speech consists of benefit, then he should not speak.

Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee رحمه الله said: "When one desires to talk, then it is upon him to think before he speaks. If there is beneficial good in what he will say, then he should speak. And if he has doubt about that, then he must not speak until he clears that doubt (by making his speech good)."

There are several sayings of the Prophet ﷺ that warn the believer or encourage him to protect or guard his tongue from any use other than speaking good. A few of such sayings are presented below:

[7] *Bukhaaree*

The tongue controls all the actions that draw to Paradise and keeps one away from Hell Fire

Mu'aadh bin Jabal ﷺ reported: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Tell me of an act that will take me to Paradise and keep me away from the Hellfire.' He said:

«لَقَدْ سَأَلْتَنِي عَنْ عَظِيمٍ وَإِنَّهُ لَيَسِيرٌ عَلَى مَنْ يَسَّرَهُ الله عَلَيْهِ: تَعْبُدُ الله وَلَا تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِي الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجُّ الْبَيْتَ»

'You have asked me about a major matter. But it is easy for he whom Allaah, may He be Exalted, makes it easy for. You must worship Allaah, associating nothing with him. You must perform the prayers and pay the Zakaat. You must fast in Ramadaan and perform the Hajj to the House (Ka'abah).'

Then he said:

«أَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى أَبْوَابِ الخَيْرِ: الصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ، وَالصَّدَقَةُ تُطْفِىءُ الْخَطِيئَةَ كَمَا يُطْفِىءُ المَاءُ النَّارَ، وَصَلَاةُ الرَّجُلِ مِنْ جَوفِ اللَّيْلِ»

'Shall I not show you the gates of goodness? Fasting is a shield; charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire; and (so does) the praying of a man in the depths of the night.'

Then he recited:

﴿تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾

'(Those) who forsake their beds to cry unto their Lord in fear and hope, and spend of what We have bestowed upon them. No soul knows what is kept hidden for them of joy, as a reward for what they used to do.' [*As-Sajdah* (32): 16]

Then he said:

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِرَأْسِ الأَمْرِ كُلِّهِ وَعَمُودِهِ وَذِرْوَةِ سَنَامِهِ»

'Shall I not tell you of the peak of the matter, its pillar and its uppermost part?'

I said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ!' He said:

«رَأْسُ الأَمْرِ الإِسْلَامُ، وَعَمودُهُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَذِرْوَةُ سَنَامِهِ الجِهَادُ»

'The peak of the matter is Islaam. The pillar is prayer and its uppermost part is *Jihaad*.

Then, he said:

«أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِملَاكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ»

Shall I not tell you of what controls all that?'

I said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ.' So he took a hold of his tongue, and said:

«كُفَّ عَلَيْكَ هٰذَا»

'Restrain this!'

I said: 'O Prophet of Allaah, will we be held accountable for what we say?' He said:

«ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ! وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى

وُجُوهِهِمْ، أَوْ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ، إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ»

"May your mother be bereaved of you, O Mu'aadh! Is there anything that causes people to be dragged on their faces – or he said – on their noses into Hellfire other than the harvests of their tongues?'"[8]

And Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«إِذَا أَصْبَحَ ابْنُ آدَمَ فَإِنَّ الأَعْضَاءَ كُلَّهَا تُكَفِّرُ اللِّسَانَ فَتَقُولُ: اتَّقِ اللهَ فِينَا فَإِنَّمَا نَحْنُ بِكَ، فَإِنِ اسْتَقَمْتَ اسْتَقَمْنَا، وَإِنِ اعْوَجَجْتَ اعْوَجَجْنَا»

"When the Son of Aadam wakes from his sleep, all of his body parts seek refuge from his tongue, saying: 'Fear Allaah with regard to us, for indeed we are part of you. So if you are upright, then we will be upright and if you are corrupt, then we shall be corrupt."[9]

Also, Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ العَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بالكَلِمَةِ مِنْ رضْوان الله لا يُلْقِي لها بالًا يَرْفَعُ اللهُ بها دَرَجَاتٍ، وإنَّ العَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بالكَلِمَةِ مِنْ سَخَطِ اللهِ لا يُلْقِي لها بالًا يَهْوِي بها في جَهنَّمَ»

[8] *Tirmidhee.*

[9] *Tirmidhee.*

"Indeed, the servant will speak words that are pleasing to Allaah, due to which he will be given a condition in which Allaah will raise him many levels. And indeed, the servant will speak words that are displeasing to Allaah, due to which he will not be given a good condition, but (instead) be thrown into the Hellfire."[10]

And from Bilaal bin Al-Haarith Al-Muznee ﷺ that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالكَلِمَةِ مِنْ رِضْوَانِ اللهِ مَا يَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبْلُغَ ما بَلَغَتْ فَيَكْتُبَ الله لَهُ بِهَا رِضْوَانَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَاهُ، وَإِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالكَلِمَةِ مِنْ سَخَطِ الله مَا يَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبْلُغَ مَا بَلَغَتْ فَيَكْتُبَ الله عَلَيْهِ بِهَا سَخَطَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَاهُ»

"Indeed, a man will speak with words that are pleasing to Allaah and by which he is not aware of what he has attained by it. Due to it, Allaah will record for him His Contentment (for him) until the day that he encounters Him. And indeed, a man will speak with words that are displeasing to Allaah by which he is not aware of what he has attained by it. Due to it, Allaah will record for him His Discontentment (with him) until the day that he encounters Him."[11]

[10] *Bukhaaree*

[11] *Tirmidhee*

Guarding the believer's tongue is a means of his entering Paradise

Sahl bin Sa'ad ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

«مَنْ يَضْمَنْ لي ما بَينَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَما بَينَ رِجْلَيْهِ أضْمَنْ لَهُ الجنَّةَ»

"Whoever can guarantee for me (that he will guard) what is between his jaws (tongue) and what is between his legs (private parts), I will guarantee for him Paradise."[12]

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

«مَنْ وَقَاهُ الله شَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَشَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ»

"Whosoever is granted protection by Allaah from the evil of what is between his jaws and from the evil of what is between his legs, will enter Paradise."[13]

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say:

«إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ، مَا يَتَبَيَّنُ مَا فِيهَا، يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ، أَبْعَدَ مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ».

"Indeed, the servant (of Allaah) will speak a word, while being unaware of (its consequences), and due to it, he will be cast into the Hellfire, farther than the distance between the east and the west."[14]

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[12] *Bukhaaree.*

[13] *Tirmidhee.*

[14] *Muslim.*

The meaning of *"while being unaware"* is that he does not stop to consider whether his speech is good or not.

Guarding the tongue is a sign of steadfastness and an indication of the best of the Muslims

Sufyaan bin 'Abdillaah ﷺ reported that he said: "O Messenger of Allaah, tell me of a matter that I may hold fast onto." He said:

«قُلْ رَبِّي اللهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقِم»

"Say: 'Allaah is my Lord', and then remain steadfast (on that)."

I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah, what is the most serious thing that I should fear for myself?" So he took a hold of his tongue and said:

«هٰذَا»

This.'"[15]

Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'aree ﷺ reported: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Which of the Muslims is best?' He responded:

«مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ»

'He whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe from.'"[16]

'Abdullaah bin 'Amr bin Al-'Aas ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

[15] *Tirmidhee.*

[16] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

«مَنْ صَمَتَ نَجَا»

"Whoever remains silent is saved."[17]

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ، مَا يَتَبَيَّنُ مَا فِيهَا، يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ، أَبْعَدَ مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ».

"A person may say a word, not realizing its repercussions, for which he will be thrown down into the fire, further than the distance between the east and the west"[18]

This *Hadeeth's* chain of narrators is weak. I only mention it here, to expose its weakness, since it is a very well known *Hadeeth*. The authentic *Ahaadeeth* similar to what I have mentioned here are many and sufficient for one who is granted success. I will mention some words on this regard in the section of backbiting, and with Allaah lies the success. As for the narrations reported on the *Salaf* concerning this matter, then they are also abundant. There is no need for mentioning them after having heard the previous reports.

However, we will briefly inform of some of them. It has reached us that Qass bin Saa'ada and Aktham bin Sayfee رحمه الله once met and one of them said to the other: "How many defects were you able to find in the son of Aadam?" The other responded: "They are too numerous to count, however, the defects that I was able to account for numbered eight thousand. I also discovered one thing which if put into practice, all of these defects would be kept hidden." He

[17] *Tirmidhee.*

[18] *Maalik, Muslim* 2988.

asked: "What is it?" He responded: **"Guarding the tongue."**

Abu 'Alee Al-Fudayl bin 'Iyyaad رحمه الله said: "Whoever limits his speech to be in accordance with his actions, will minimize his speech on that which doesn't concern him."

Imaam Ash-Shaafi'ee رحمه الله said to his student Rabee': "O Rabee'! Do not speak about things that do not concern you, for indeed every time that you speak a word, it takes control of you and you do not have control of it!"

'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood ﷺ said: "There is nothing that deserves to be imprisoned more than the tongue."

Others have stated: "The example of the tongue is like that of a savage beast. If you do not lock it up, it will set out against you."

Abul-Qaasim Al-Qushayree رحمه الله said in his famous *Risaalah*: "Remaining silent is salvation and that is a fundamental principle. And staying quiet at the proper time is a characteristic of manhood, just as speaking when it is proper to speak is from the most honourable of matters."

And he said: "I heard Abu 'Alee Ad-Daqaaq رحمه الله say: 'Whoever remains silent concerning the truth, then he is a silent devil.'"

He also said: "As for the preference of those who strive in good to remain silent, then that is because of what they know of the bad consequences that result from talking and from the soul's being pleased with that. It is also because of the praiseworthy attributes that will show (by doing this) and because it will incline him towards distinguishing between its types – whether good speech or its opposite. This is the characteristic of those endowed with religious devotion. And this is one of their pillars with regard to educating the people."

Chapter 2

The Prohibition of Backbiting and Gossiping

Know that these two matters are from the vilest and most despicable of things, yet the most widely spread amongst mankind, such that no one is free from them except for a few people. Thus, I begin with these two, due to the public's need for being warned of them.

As for Backbiting (*Gheebah*), then it is when you mention something about a person (in his absence), that he hates (to have mentioned), whether it is about his body, his religious characteristics, his worldly affairs, his self, his physical appearance, his character, his wealth, his child, his father, his wife, his servant, his slave, his turban, his attire, his manner of walking, his smile, his dissoluteness, his frowning, his cheerfulness or anything else related to the above. Likewise, it is the same whether you mention that about him with words, through writings, or whether you point or indicate him by gesturing with your eyes, hand or head.

As for the body, then it is when you say: "he is blind", "he limps", "he is bleary-eyed", "he is bald", "he is short", "he is tall", "he is black", "he is yellow."

As for his religious qualities, then it is when you say: "he is a sinner", "he is a thief", "he is a betrayer", "he is an oppressor", "he takes the prayer lightly", "he is lenient with impurities", "he does not behave well towards his parents", "he does not pay the *Zakaah* duly", and "he does not avoid backbiting."

As for the worldly matters, then it is when you say: "he has poor manners", "he is unmindful of people", "he does not think that anyone has a right over him", "he talks too much", "he eats and sleeps too much", "he sleeps at the wrong times", "he sits in places he does not belong in."

As for those matters connected with one's parents, then it is when you say: "his father is a sinner", "an Indian", "a Nabatean", "a Negro", "a loafer", "a seedsman", "a cattle dealer", "a carpenter", "a blacksmith", "a weaver."

As for his character, then it is when you say: "he has bad manners", "he is arrogant", "he is quarrelsome", "he is rash and hasty", "he is tyrannical", "he is feeble", "he has a weak heart", "he is irresponsible", "he is dismal", "he is dissolute", etc.

As for the garment: "it has wide sleeves", "it has short hems", "what a filthy garment", and so on.

The remaining categories can be deduced based upon what we have mentioned, considering that the source rule behind it is: "Mentioning some aspect about him that he hates to have mentioned." Imaam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله quoted the consensus of the Muslim scholars with regard to backbiting being: "One is mentioning something about other people (in their absence), which they hate to have mentioned." The authentic

hadeeth clarifying this will be stated later.

As for Gossiping (*Nameemah*), then it is when one conveys and carries the talk of people from one group of individuals to another with the intent of causing discord between the two of them.

These are the definitions of the two. As for their rulings, then they are forbidden according to the unanimous agreement of the Muslim scholars. The clear evidences in the Qur'aan, the *Sunnah* and the consensus of the *Ummah* indicate its prohibition.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا﴾

"And do not backbite one another." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 12]

And He says:

﴿وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ﴾

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter." [*Al-Humazah* (104): 1]

And He ﷻ says:

﴿هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ﴾

"A slanderer going about with gossip." [*Al-Qalam* (68): 11]

Hudhayfah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ نَمَّامٌ

"The one who spreads gossip (Namaam) will not enter Paradise."[19]

[19] *Bukhaaree.*

Ibn 'Abbaas ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ once passed by two graves and said:

«يُعَذَّبَانِ وَمَا يُعَذَّبانِ في كَبِيرٍ»، ثُمَّ قالَ: «بَلى، كانَ أَحدهُمَا لا يَسْتَتِر مِنْ بَولِهِ، وَكانَ الآخَرُ يَمْشِي بِالنَّمِيمَةِ»

"Verily, they (occupants of graves) are both being tormented and they are not being tormented for something major." (In the report from Al-Bukhaaree, it states:) *"Rather, it is indeed not something major. As for the first one, then he used to go around spreading gossip (Nameemah) and as for the other, then he used not to protect himself from his own urine."*[20]

The scholars say the meaning of *"and they are not being tormented for something major"* is *"something major"* according to their opinion or *"something major"* for them to have abandoned doing.

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ once said (to his Companions):

«أَتَدْرُونَ مَا الْغِيبَةُ؟»

"Do you know what backbiting is?"

They said: "Allaah and His Messenger know best." He said:

«ذِكْرُكَ أَخَاكَ بِمَا يَكْرَهُ»

"Your mentioning something about your brother (in his absence) that he hates (to have mentioned)."

It was said: "What if there exists in my brother, that which I say (of him)?" He said:

[20] *Bukhaaree.*

«إِن كَانَ فِيهِ مَا تَقُولُ، فَقَدِاغْتَبْتَهُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيهِ، فَقَدْ بَهَتَّهُ»

"If there is found in him what you say, then you have backbitten him. And if there is not found in him what you say, then you have slandered him."[21]

Abu Bakrah ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said in his sermon on the day of Sacrifice, during his farewell pilgrimage:

«فإِنَّ دِماءَكُمْ وَأَمْوالَكُمْ وأَعْراضَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ حَرامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذا، في شَهْرِكُمْ هٰذا، في بَلَدِكُمْ هٰذا»

"Verily, your blood, your wealth and your honour are sacred for you, just as this day of yours is sacred, in this land of yours, in this month of yours. Have I not conveyed?"[22]

'Aa'ishah ﷺ narrated: "I said to the Prophet ﷺ: 'You are more than Safiyyah by such-and-such.' (Some of the narrators said it meant that she was short). So he said:

«لَقَدْ قُلْتِ كَلِمَةً لَوْ مُزِجَ بِهَا الْبَحْرُ لَمَزَجَتْهُ»

'You have stated a word, which if mixed with the water of the sea, it would surely stain it.'"[23]

At-Tirmidhee رحمه الله said this *Hadeeth* was *Hasan Saheeh*. I say that the word for staining (*Mazaja*) means: That it (her statement) would mix with the water with such a mixing that it would change its taste and smell due to the severity of its stench and

[21] *Muslim.*

[22] *Bukhaaree.*

[23] *Abu Dawood.*

vileness. This *Hadeeth* is one of the greatest proofs in showing the forbiddance of backbiting, if not the greatest. And I do not know of any other *Hadeeth* that reaches this level with regard to condemning backbiting.

﴿وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ ۝ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْىٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾

"And he (the Prophet) does not speak from his own desire. Rather, it is only Revelation revealed (to him)." [*An-Najm* (53): 3-4]

We ask Allaah ﷻ, the Most Generous, for His kindness and forgiveness from all detestable acts.

Anas ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

«لَمَّا عُرِجَ بِي مَرَرْتُ بِقَوْمٍ لَهُمْ أَظْفَارٌ مِنْ نُحَاسٍ يَخْمِشُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَصُدُورَهُمْ، فَقُلْتُ: مَنْ هٰؤُلَاءِ يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟ قَالَ: هٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ لُحُومَ النَّاسِ وَيَقَعُونَ فِي أَعْرَاضِهِمْ»

"When I was ascended (to the heavens), I came across a people that had nails made of brass, with which they were scratching their faces and their chests. So I said: 'Who are these people, O Jibreel?' He said: 'They are the ones who eat the flesh of people[24] and dishonour them.'"[25]

[24] **Translator's Note:** This is a reference to backbiting, since Allaah likens it to eating a human's flesh in His saying:

﴿وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ﴾

"And do not backbite one another! Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would surely hate it!" [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 12]

[25] *Ahmad.*

It is also reported from Sa'eed bin Zayd ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ مِنْ أَرْبَى الرِّبَا الاسْتِطَالَةَ فِي عِرْضِ الْمُسْلِمِ بِغَيْرِ حقٍّ»

"Verily, one of the worst forms of Ribaa *(interest) is being condescending with regard to a Muslim's honour, without due right."*[26]

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ reported that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

«الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَخُونُهُ ولَا يَكْذِبُهُ، وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ، كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ: عِرْضُهُ وَمَالُهُ ودَمُهُ، التَّقْوَى هَهُنَا بِحَسْبِ امْرِىءٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْتَقِرَ أَخَاهُالْمُسْلِمَ»

"A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. He does not betray him, nor does he lie to him, nor does he forsake him. All of the Muslim to (another) Muslim is sacred – his honour, his wealth and his blood. Taqwaa (fear and obedience to Allaah) is right here (pointing to his chest). It is enough evil for a person to look down upon his fellow Muslim."[27]

At-Tirmidhee said it was a *Hasan Hadeeth*. I say that there is no *Hadeeth* greater in advantage and more numerous in points of benefit than this *Hadeeth*. And with Allaah ﷻ lies the success.

The Backbiting of the Heart

Know that having bad thoughts about someone is forbidden just like having bad speech about him. So just as it is forbidden

[26] *Abu Dawood.*

[27] *Tirmidhee.*

for you to speak to others about the defects of a person, it is likewise forbidden for you to speak to yourself about that and to hold bad thoughts for him. Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ﴾

"O you who believe, avoid much (types) of suspicion. Verily some (forms) of suspicion is a sin." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 12]

And Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

«إِيَّاكُمْ والظَّنَّ، فإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الحَديثِ»

"Beware of suspicion, for indeed suspicion is the most untruthful form of speech."[28]

The *Ahaadeeth*[29] with this same understanding I have mentioned here are many. What the backbiting of the heart means, is: When the heart has firm conviction and holds bad thoughts about someone. But as for the notions that occasionally display in one's mind or when one talks to himself, then as long as these thoughts do not remain established and continuous in him, it is excused according to the consensus of the scholars. This is because he has no choice in the matter so as to stop it from occurring nor can he find any way to liberate himself from it when it does occur. This is the understanding of what has been authentically established (in the texts).

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

[28] *Bukhaaree*.

[29] Plural of *Hadeeth*.

«إِنَّ اللهَ تَجاوَزَ لِأُمَّتِي عَمَّا وَسْوَسَتْ - أَوْ حَدَّثَتْ - بِهِ أَنْفُسَها ما لم تَعْمَلْ بِهِ أَوْ تَكَلَّمْ»

"Indeed, Allaah has permitted for my Ummah that which their souls whisper to them, so long as they do not speak it out (audibly) or act upon it."[30]

The scholars say: "This refers to the notions that form in one's mind, but do not become settled or established there."

And they said: "This is regardless if the notion consists of backbiting, disbelief or so on (i.e. it is pardoned, so long as it does not settle). So (for example) whoever's mind becomes flooded with thoughts of disbelief, but they are only thoughts, without him intending to have them carried out, and he then rids himself of these thoughts right after they occur, he is not a disbeliever nor is there any sin on him."[31]

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[30] *Bukhaaree*

[31] The proof of this position is from *Hadeeth* reported by Muslim: Narrated by Abu Hurayrah ﷺ: "Some people from amongst the Companions of the Messenger ﷺ came to him and said: 'Verily we perceive in our minds that which every one of us considers it too grave to express.' He (the Prophet ﷺ) said:

«أَوَ قَدْ وَجَدْتُمُوهُ؟»

'Do you really perceive it?'

They said: 'Yes.' Upon this he remarked:

«ذَاكَ صَرِيحُ الْإِيمَانِ»

'That is the faith manifest.'

This *Hadeeth* shows the Companions' zeal and enthusiasm in commanding themselves with good and forbidding themselves from evil, such that they

The reason for these thoughts being excused is because thoughts are impossible to prevent. Rather, one is only able to prevent those thoughts from becoming settled and established in one's mind. This is why the heart's being resolute and determined on these thoughts is forbidden. So whenever these thoughts, which consist of backbiting or any other sin, present themselves in your mind, it is an obligation on you to repel them, turn away from them and mention some excuses or explanations that will change what seems apparent.

Abu Haamid Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله said in *Al-Ihyaa*: "If bad thoughts should occur in your heart, then these are from the whisperings of the Devil, which he has placed in you. So you must deny and reject them because he is indeed the most wicked of evildoers (*Faasiq*). And Allaah has stated:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ﴾

"O you who believe! If a wicked person (i.e. *Faasiq*) comes to you with news, then verify it, lest you harm people without realizing it (i.e. out of ignorance) and afterwards you become regretful for what you've done." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 6]

So it is not permissible for you to believe *Iblees* (the Devil). And if there is some sign that indicates that he is corrupt, yet he implies the opposite of that, then it is not permissible to hold bad

would even fight against the evil notions that passed through their minds. But as it is impossible to prevent such thoughts from occurring every now and then, they asked the Prophet ﷺ about this. His response to them meant that their trying to repel these thoughts showed their strong *Eemaan* (Faith) and love for good.

thoughts (for him).

Among the signs that indicate one holding bad thoughts (for someone) is that your heart changes with him from the way it used to be, and that you run away from him and find him to be unbearable. And that you are lazy when it comes to having concern for him, showing kindness to him and being worried when he does evil. And indeed the Devil comes close to one's heart when the slightest trace of defects show in people, and he places this in you, while you think (these thoughts) occur due to your astuteness, intelligence and quick alertness. But the believer sees with the light of Allaah. So this person is in reality speaking with the deceptions and the evil plots of the Devil.

And if a trustworthy person informs you of this, then do not believe him nor reject him, in order that you will not have bad thoughts about either of them. Whenever some evil thoughts about another Muslim come into your mind, then let that make you increase in your showing concern and being kind to him because this will enrage the Devil and repel him from you. So he will not place such thoughts in you afterward out of fear that it will only cause you to increase in your supplication for that person.

And whenever you come to know of a defect or a mistake in another Muslim based on some proofs, which cannot be denied, then advise him in privacy and do not let the Devil deceive you such that he invites you and leads you towards backbiting him. And when you admonish him, then do not admonish him while you are happy and pleased that you have knowledge of his deficiency. So it is as if he is looking at you with the eyes of awe and respect while you are looking down at him with condescending eyes.

Rather, make your intention in that to free him from this sin,

while you are distressed over him, just as you are distressed when some deficiency enters in you. And his getting rid of that deficiency without you having to admonish him (i.e. on his own) should be more beloved to you than him having to rid himself of it due to your admonishing." These are the words of Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله.

I say: If someone is presented with a notion of bad thoughts for another person, he should cut off those bad thoughts. But this is unless there is some (religiously) legislated benefit that leads to thinking (about that person) in this manner. So if such a reason exists, holding these thoughts about his deficiencies is permissible, as well as warning against them, as can be seen in the *Jarh* (criticism) of certain witnesses, reporters and others."

Concerning Gossiping

Imaam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله said: "For the most part, gossip (*Nameemah*) is attributed to the one who takes the statement of a person (concerning another individual), and relates it back to that individual that is being spoken about. An example of this is when someone says: 'That person said such-and-such about you.'

However, gossiping is not limited to just this example, but rather its extent is: Exposing that which one hates to have exposed, whether the one he is relating from or the one he is relating the story to or the third party hates it. And it is the same if this exposing is done by speech or by writing or by gesturing, etc, and regardless whether what is being narrated relates to someone's sayings or actions, and whether it is a defect or other than that.

So the reality of gossiping is: Spreading what is supposed to

be private, and destroying the concealment of what he hates to have exposed. A person must keep quiet with regard to anything he sees (or hears) from the conditions of people, except for that which if he relates will have a benefit for a Muslim or it will prevent a sin from occurring."

And he said: "Anyone that has gossip (*Nameemah*) conveyed to him, and it is said to him: 'Such-and-such person said this about you', then there are six things required from him:

1. He must not believe him because the one conveying the news is a gossiper (*Namaam*), and the gossiper is a wicked person (*Faasiq*), so his reports are rejected.[32]

2. He must forbid him from doing that, advise him and declare the detestability of his action.

3. He must hate him for the sake of Allaah, for indeed, he is hated in the sight of Allaah and hating for the sake of Allaah is an obligation.

4. He must not think evil thoughts about the person he is relating from, based on Allaah's Saying:

﴿ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ﴾

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[32] **Translator's Note** This is based on Allaah's Saying:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ﴾

"O who beleive! If a wicked person (i.e. *Faasiq*) comes to you with news, then verify it, lest you harm people without realizing it (i.e. out of ignorance) and afterwards you become regretful for what you've done." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 6]

"Avoid much (types of) suspicion." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 12]

5. What has been related to you (about someone) should not cause you to spy or investigate further into the matter, because Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا۟﴾

"And do not spy on one another." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 12]

6. He should not be pleased for himself with what he has forbidden for the gossiper. Thus he should not report the gossip that was conveyed to him by saying: 'Such and such person told me this', for then he would become a gossiper himself and he would be committing that which he forbade."

It has been reported that a man went to 'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Azeez رحمه الله and said something to him about another person. So 'Umar رحمه الله said to him: "If you wish, we shall investigate your case. If you are lying, then you are from those who fall under the *Ayah*:

﴿إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟﴾

"If a wicked person comes to you with news, then verify it" [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 6]

and if you are telling the truth, then you fall under the *aayah*:

﴿هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ﴾

"Backbiter, going about spreading slander." [*Al-Qalam* (68): 11]

And if you wish, we can overlook the matter." So the man said: "Please overlook it, O Commander of the Believers! I

will never mention it again."

Important Points Related To The Limits Of Backbiting

It's Guidelines: Everything by which one causes others to understand the deficiencies found in a Muslim, then that is the backbiting that is forbidden. An example of this is when someone tells others that "such and such" individual walks with a limp or that he walks while humped over or anything similar to that from the aspects by which one desires to narrate in order to belittle the individual. All of this is *haraam* (forbidden) – there being no difference of opinion in this regard.

Another example of this, is when an author mentions a specific individual in his book, saying "Such-and-such person says this..." desiring to degrade him and dishonour him. This is *Haraam*. However, if his intention is to clarify that person's mistake so that it will not be followed, or to clarify his deficiency in knowledge so that he will not mislead others or have his opinions accepted, then this is not backbiting. Rather it is advice (*Naseehah*), which is an obligation and which will be rewarded if that is what he (truly) intended.

Likewise, if the author or anyone else speaks generally, saying: "these people" or "this group says such-and-such, and this is an error" or "a mistake" or "ignorance" or "negligence" or similar to that, then this is not backbiting. Backbiting is only when one mentions a specified individual or a specific group of people (i.e. by name).

Also from the forbidden types of backbiting is: When one says: "Some of the people did such-and-such" or "some of the scholars" or "some who claim to have knowledge" or "some of

the *Muftees*" or "some who attribute themselves to rectifying (the *Ummah*)" or "who claim abstinence" or "some people who passed by us today" or "some people that we saw" or similar to this "...did such-and-such", without specifying anyone, but yet the one being spoken to realizes who the individuals are specifically, due to the speaker's causing him to understand who they are (through his words).

Also from its types is: The backbiting of the devoutly pious and knowledgeable individuals, for indeed they turn towards committing backbiting by doing it in a manner by which they cause others to understand (the person they are talking about without specifying him), just as something that is quite clear is understood. So (for example) when it is said to one of them: "How is such and such person?" He responds: "May Allaah rectify us" or "May Allaah forgive us" or "May Allaah rectify him" or "We ask Allaah for his pardon!" or "We give praise to Allaah for not having tested us with entering into darkness" or "We seek refuge in Allaah from evil" or "May Allaah save us from having little modesty" or "O Allaah, accept our repentance", and what is similar to that, by which one will come to realize that person's defects. All of this is from the forbidden types of backbiting.

Likewise, it is the same if one says: "Such-and-such person is being tested with that which all of us were tested with" or "his wealth is a means for that (test)" or "we all have done such an act." These are the types of examples regarding this matter. And if this is not so, then we must refer back to the source-principle of Backbiting, which is: One's causing his audience to understand the defects found in certain people (even without mentioning their names), as has been stated previously.

Know that in the same way that backbiting is forbidden for the one who speaks it, it is likewise forbidden for the one who listens

to it and approves of it. Thus, it is obligatory on the one who hears an individual embarking on committing the prohibited form of backbiting, to forbid him from doing it as long as he does not fear any open harm resulting from that. But if he does fear (harm) from that, then he is obligated to reject the backbiting with his heart and to detach himself from that gathering if he is able to do so. If he has the ability to reject it with his tongue or to cut the backbiting off by changing the topic, then that becomes required of him. And if he does not do that, then he has committed an act of disobedience (i.e. sinned).

If he says with his tongue: "Be quiet!" while desiring with his heart for it to continue; then Abu Haamid Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله said: "This is hypocrisy. It does not remove him from the sin he is upon. Rather, he must hate it with his heart."

If he is forced to stay in that gathering in which backbiting is taking place, and he fears from forbidding it, or he forbids it but it is not accepted from him and he cannot find a way to separate himself from them, then he is prohibited from listening and paying attention to the backbiting. Instead, his way out should be by making remembrance of Allaah (*Dhikr*) with both his tongue and heart or just his heart. Or he should think about something else in order to preoccupy himself from having to listen to it. After having done this, his hearing it without listening or paying attention to it will not harm him, while he is in this mentioned state. If he is able, after this, to withdraw from them and they are still backbiting, then separating oneself is an obligation.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِي

حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ مَعَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ﴾

"And when you see those who engage in false conversations about Our Verses by mocking at them, then turn away from them until they engage in a different topic of speech. But if the Devil causes you to forget, then after remembering, do not sit in the company of those people who are the wrong-doers." [*Al-An'aam* (6): 68]

It has been reported that Ibraaheem bin Adham was once invited to a *Waleemah* (wedding feast), so he attended it and found people there who were mentioning a man that didn't come. They were saying: "He is truly lazy." So Ibraaheem said: "I brought this upon myself, such that I attended a place in which people are backbiting one another." So he left from there and did not eat for three days. What has been recited of poetry with regard to this is:

"And restrain your ears from hearing vile speech just as you restrain your tongue from speaking it. Because when you listen to this vile speech you are a partner to the one saying it, so reflect!"[33]

[33] Anas bin Maalik ﷺ said: "The Arabs used to serve one another when they were travelling, and Abu Bakr and 'Umar had a man with them who was serving them. They fell asleep then woke up, and he had not prepared any food for them. One of them said to the other, 'This man sleeps too much.' (This is in *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, Daar Al-Sha'b edn. According to the version quoted by Al-Albaani in *Al-Silsilat Al-Saheehah*, no. 2608, ...). They woke him up and said, 'Go to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and tell him that Abu Bakr ﷺ and 'Umar ﷺ send their *Salaams* to you and are asking for food.' He (the Prophet ﷺ) said:

أَقْرِأْهُمَا السَّلَامَ، وَأَخْبِرْهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا قَدِ ائْتَدَمَا

How Does One Prevent Himself From Backbiting?

Know that the main focus of this chapter is to let each individual (reading) apply all the texts we have stated concerning the prohibition of backbiting to himself and then to reflect on the Statement of Allaah ﷻ:

﴿مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ﴾

"Not a word does one utter, except that there is an (angel) Watching, Ready to record it." [*Qaaf* (50): 18]

And His Statement:

﴿وَتَحْسَبُونَهُۥ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ﴾

"And you perceived it (the statement of slander) to be something small, while in the sight of Allaah, it was an

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'Send my salaams to them and tell them that they have already eaten.' They got worried, so they came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, we sent word to you asking for food, and you told us that we had already eaten? What have we eaten?' He said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! إِنِّي لَأَرَى لَحْمَهُ بَيْنَ أَنْيَابِكُمَا

'The flesh of your brother. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I can see his flesh between your teeth'

meaning the flesh of the one about whom they had backbitten.' They said, 'Ask for forgiveness for us.' He said:

هُوَ فَلْيَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمَا

'Let him ask for forgiveness for you.'"

(*Al-Silsilat Al-Saheehah*, no. 2608. It was attributed to Al-Kharaa'iti in *Masaawa' Al-Akhlaaq* and to Al-Diya' in *Al-Mukhtaarah*. Ibn Katheer mentioned it in his *Tafseer* of *Soorat Al-Hujuraat*, 7/363, Dar Al-Sha'b edn.)

enormity." [*An-Noor* (24): 15]

And the authentic *Hadeeth* that we mentioned previously:

وَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مِنْ سُخْطِ اللهِ لَا يُلْقِي لَهَا بَالًا، يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ

"Indeed, the servant may say a word from which Allaah's Displeasure is gained, while he does not realize it. And due to it, he will be thrown into the Hell-fire."[34]

He must also reflect on all the other evidences we have stated in the previous chapters on guarding the tongue and backbiting, as well. It is upon each individual to attach and apply these (texts) to all of his statements, such that (he says to himself before speaking): "Allaah is with me", "Allaah is witnessing me", "Allaah is watching me."

A man once said to Al-Hasan Al-Basree رحمه الله: "You have backbitten me." So he said: "Who are you, so that I may know to whom my good deeds are going?" And 'Abdullaah bin Al-Mubaarak رحمه الله said: "If I were to backbite someone, I would surely backbite my parents for they have the most right to (receive) my good deeds."

[34] *Saheeh* – Stated previously.

Chapter 3

What Type Of Backbiting Is Permissible?

Know that although backbiting is forbidden, it becomes permissible under certain circumstances when done for a beneficial reason. The authorization for doing it must be based on a valid and legitimate reason of which in its absence, its permissibility cannot be achieved. The authorization (making backbiting allowable) can be any one of the following six reasons:

1. Oppression

It is permissible for the one who is oppressed to complain about his situation to the ruler or the judge or anyone else who holds authority or has the ability to grant him justice against his oppressor. He should say: "Such-and-such person wronged me" and "he did such thing to me", and "he coerced me in this

manner" and so on.[35]

2. Seeking assistance in changing an evil and in returning a sinner back to what is correct

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[35] Ash-Sha'bee ﷺ reported that Ka'b bin Soor was sitting with 'Umar ﷺ when a woman came and said, "O Commander of the Believers! I have not seen a man better than my husband, By Allaah, he prays the night and fasts the day," Upon hearing this, 'Umar praised the woman and supplicated for her, and she shyly departed. Ka'b then said, "O Commander of the Believers! Shouldn't you have considered her accusation against her husband, for she indeed was quite eloquent in her complaint!" 'Umar replied, "Why do you not judge between them, for you have understood about her situation that which I did not." Ka'b said, "I view her situation as if she has three co-wives. My judgement is to allow her husband three days and nights for worship, and one day and night for her." 'Umar said, "By Allaah, your first understanding (of her situation) is not more amazing than the second (the judgement). I hereby appoint you as judge over Al-Basrah, and indeed, you are a remarkable judge." (Ibn Abee Shaybah (verified to be authentic by Al-Albaanee in *Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel*)]

Narrated by Abu Juhaifa ﷺ: "The Prophet ﷺ made a bond of brotherhood between Salmaan ﷺ and Abu Ad-Darda' ﷺ. Salmaan paid a visit to Abu Ad-Darda' and found Um Ad-Darda' dressed in shabby clothes and asked her why she was in that state. She replied, "Your brother Abu Ad-Darda' is not interested in (the luxuries of) this world." In the meantime Abu Ad-Darda' came and prepared a meal for Salmaan. Salmaan requested Abu Ad-Darda' to eat (with him), but Abu Ad-Darda' said, "I am fasting." Salmaan said, "I am not going to eat unless you eat." So, Abu Ad-Darda' ate (with Salmaan). When it was night and (a part of the night passed), Abu Ad-Darda' got up (to offer the night prayer), but Salmaan told him to sleep and Abu Ad-Darda' slept. After sometime Abu Ad-Darda' again got up but Salmaan told him to sleep. When it was the last hours of the night, Salmaan told him to get up then, and both of them offered the prayer. Salmaan told Abu Ad-Darda', "Your Lord has a right on you, your soul has a right on you, and your family has a right on you; so you should give the rights of all those who has a right on you." Abu Ad-Darda' came to the Prophet ﷺ and narrated the whole story. The Prophet ﷺ said:

صَدَقَ سَلْمَانُ

"Salmaan has spoken the truth." (*Bukhaaree*)

One should say to the individual whom he expects has the capability of putting a stop to the evil: "Such-and-such person did this, so I prevented him from it" or something to that effect. His objective should be to look for a way to ultimately put an end to the evil. If he does not intend that as his goal, then it is forbidden (for him to mention it).[36]

3. Seeking a *Fatwaa* (religious ruling)

One should do this by saying to the *Muftee* (scholar capable of issuing a *Fatwa*): "My father" or "my brother" or "such-and-such person wronged me in this way." "Does he has the right to do so?" "How shall I go about putting an end to it and obtain my right while repelling oppression from myself?" and so on. Likewise, one may say: "My wife did such-and-such to me" or "my husband did such and such a thing" and so on. This is permissible due to the necessity for it, however, to be more cautious, it is better for one to say: "What do you say about a man who has done such-and -such thing?" or "concerning a husband" or "concerning a wife who did such-and-such" (without saying "my"), etc.

By doing this, the goal is achieved without having to resort to specifying anyone. However, specifying an individual by name

[36] Narrated by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ﷺ: "I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ as saying:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الإِيمَانِ

'He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue; and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart and that is the least of faith.'" (Muslim)

is permissible (in this circumstance), based on the *Hadeeth* of Hind ﷺ, which we shall mention later, by the Will of Allaah, in which she told Allaah's Messenger ﷺ: "Indeed, Abu Sufyaan (her husband) is a stingy man."[37] And the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ did not forbid her from saying this.

4. Warning and Advising the Muslims against Evil

There are several perspectives to this, of which one is: Declaring someone unreliable in the field of narrating *Hadeeth* and giving testimony. This is permissible to do, according to the *Ijmaa'* (consensus of the Muslim scholars). Rather, it becomes obligatory due to its necessity. Another case is when an individual desires to enter into a relationship with another person either through marriage, business, the consignment of property, the consigning of something to him or any other of the daily affairs. It is obligatory on you to mention to that individual what you know about the person he wants to get involved with, with the intention of advising him.

If your objective can be achieved by simply saying: "It is not good for you to engage with him in business transactions" or "in a relationship through marriage" or by saying: "You should not do this" or anything similar to that, then adding more to this, such as by mentioning his bad characteristics is not permissible. And if the objective cannot be reached, except by specifically explaining that person's condition to him, then you may mention that to him in detail.

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[37] Narrated by Aa'ishah ﷺ: "Hind (bint 'Utba) said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Abu Sufyan is a miserly man and I need to take some money of his wealth." The Prophet ﷺ said:

خُذِي مِنْ مَالِهِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مَا يَكْفِيكِ وَيَكْفِي بَنِيكِ

"Take reasonably what is sufficient for you and your children." (*Bukhaaree*)

Another case is when you see someone buying a product from an individual who is known for stealing or fornicating or drinking or other than these. It is then upon you to inform the buyer of this, on the count that he is not knowledgeable of it already. And this case is not specified to this example only. Rather, it also applies when you have knowledge that the commodity that is being traded is defective. It is then obligatory upon you to clarify this matter to the buyer, if he does not know of it.

Another case is when you see a student going to an innovator or a deviant, seeking to attain knowledge from him, and you fear that may affect the student. In that situation, you must advise him about the condition of that innovator, on the condition that your intention only be for the sake of advising. And this is something in which regard many people fall into error, for perhaps the person speaking may do this (advising) because he is jealous (of the person he is warning against). Or perhaps the Devil may deceive him about this matter, causing him to believe that what he is doing is advising and showing compassion, so he believes this.

One last case is when a person has some leadership role, which he does not fulfil properly either because he is not fit for it or because he is a sinner or neglectful, etc. So in this case, one must mention this to those who have general leadership over this person, so that he can be removed and someone fit can be put in charge. Or those who have charge over him can know this about him so that they can deal with him accordingly and not be deceived by him, and so that they can make the right efforts to encourage him to be upright or to replace him.[38]

[38] Narrated by Jabir bin Samura ﷺ: "The People of Kufa complained against Sa'd ﷺ to 'Umar ﷺ and the latter dismissed him and appointed 'Ammar ﷺ as their chief. They lodged many complaints against Sa'd and even they alleged that

5. When one openly exposes his acts of evil or his innovation

An example of this is when someone has openly exposed his consumption of alcohol, or his illegal confiscation of people's money and raising of their taxes unjustly and his usurping command wrongfully. It is thus permissible for one to talk about what that individual has made public. But it is forbidden to mention any of his other defects, unless they fall under one of the categories, which we have mentioned that backbiting is permissible.

6. Defining someone – If someone is known to the people by his nickname, such as "the bleary eyed one", "the one who limps",

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he did not pray properly. 'Umar ﷺ sent for him and said, "O Aba Ishaq! These people claim that you do not pray properly." Abu Ishaq said, "By Allaah, I used to pray with them a prayer similar to that of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ and I never reduced anything of it. I used to prolong the first two *Rakat* of *'Ishaa'* prayer and shorten the last two *Rakat*." 'Umar ﷺ said, "O Aba Ishaq, this was what I thought about you." And then he sent one or more persons with him to Kufa so as to ask the people about him. So they went there and did not leave any mosque without asking about him.

All the people praised him till they came to the mosque of the tribe of Bani 'Abs; one of the men called Usama bin Qatada with a surname of Aba Sa'da stood up and said, "As you have put us under an oath; I am bound to tell you that Sa'd never went himself with the army and never distributed (the war booty) equally and never did justice in legal verdicts." (On hearing it) Sa'd said, "I pray to Allaah for three things: O Allaah! If this slave of yours is a liar and got up for showing off, give him a long life, increase his poverty and put him to trials." (And so it happened).

Later on when that person was asked how he was, he used to reply that he was an old man in trial as the result of Sa'd's curse. 'Abdul Malik, the sub narrator, said that he had seen him afterwards and his eyebrows were overhanging his eyes owing to old age and he used to tease and assault the small girls in the way." (*Bukhaaree*) The proof in this narration is that 'Umar ﷺ did not adjudge the complainant to be backbiting. Rather, he acted upon them. And Allaah ﷻ knows best.

"the deaf guy", "the blind guy", "cross-eyed", "flat-nosed", and other than that, then it is permissible to particularize him as such, with the aim of identifying him. However, it is forbidden to apply that to him, when one's intention is to degrade him. If he can be identified with another (more appropriate) type of name, then that is more preferable.

These are the six cases, in which the scholars have stated that backbiting is permissible, if it is done in accordance to the guidelines we mentioned above. From those who have reported similar to what we have stated is Abu Haamid Al-Ghazaalee رحمه الله in his book *"Al-Ihyaa"*[39], as well as other scholars. The evidences for the permissibility of backbiting can be found in authentic and well-known *Ahaadeeth*.

Furthermore, there is an agreement of the scholars concerning the allowance of backbiting in these six cases. It is reported in the *Saheehs* of Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim that 'Aa'ishah ﷺ said: "A man sought permission of the Prophet ﷺ to enter (his house), so he said:

[39] *Ihyaa' Uloom Ad-Deen*, by Imaam Aboo Haamid Al-Ghazzaalee رحمه الله, is a book written about the actions of the heart. In praise and in criticism of the book, *Shaykhul-Islaam* Ibn Taymiyyah said: "*Al-Ihyaa* contains many beneficial points, but it contains objectionable subjects, since it contains corrupt talks of the philosophers about *Tawheed*, Prophethood, and the Hereafter. Mentioning the 'knowledge' of the *Soofees* is like taking an enemy of the Muslims and dressing him up in Muslim clothes...It contains many *Ahaadeeth* and reports, which are weak, rather fabricated (*Mawdoo'*), and it contains many mistakes and lies of the *Soofees*.
Along with that it also contains sayings of the *Shaykhs* of the *Soofees* who have knowledge and are upright regarding actions of the heart, being in accordance with the Book and the *Sunnah*, and other things concerning worship and behaviour, which also conform to the Book and the *Sunnah*, such things being more than that which is to be rejected. Therefore the opinions of the people vary and they differ about it."

ائْذَنُوا لَهُ، بِئْسَ أَخُو الْعَشِيرَةِ

'Permit him to enter, and what an evil brother to (his) relatives he is.'"[40]

Al-Bukhaaree uses this *Hadeeth* as evidence for the permissibility of backbiting the people of mischief and doubts.

Ibn Mas'ood ﷺ narrated: "The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ divided a portion (of war booty amongst the people), so a man from the Ansaar said: I swear by Allaah, Muhammad did not intend the face of Allaah by this (i.e. he was not fair). So I went to Allaah's Messenger and informed him of this. His face changed (i.e. he became mad) and said:

رَحِمَ اللهُ مُوسَى قَدْ أُوذِيَ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنْ هَذَا فَصَبَرَ

'May Allaah have mercy on Moosaa. He was indeed abused with greater than this, but he was patient.'"[41]

Al-Bukhaaree uses this *Hadeeth* as proof that a person is allowed to inform his brother of what is being said about him. 'Aa'ishah ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ once said:

مَا أَظُنُّ فُلَانًا وَفُلَانًا يَعْرِفَانِ مِنْ دِينِنَا شَيْئًا

"I do not think that this person and that person know anything at all about our Religion."[42]

Al-Laith bin Sa'ad ﷺ, one of the narrators of the *Hadeeth's*

[40] *Bukhaaree.*

[41] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[42] *Bukhaaree.*

chain said: "They were two individuals from among the hypocrites (at his time)." Zayd bin Arqam ﷺ reported: "We set out on a journey with the Prophet and the people suffered great difficulty (due to a lack of provisions). So 'Abdullaah bin Ubay[43] said to his companions: 'Don't spend on those who are with Allaah's Messenger ﷺ so that they may disperse and go away from him.' He said: 'If we return to Madeenah, surely, the more honourable will expel the lowly ones from it. So I went to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him of that. He sent for 'Abdullaah bin Ubay and asked him, but 'Abdullaah bin Ubay swore that he did not say so. So the people said: 'Zayd told a lie to Allaah's Messenger.' And what they said distressed me very much.

Later Allaah ﷻ revealed the confirmation of my statement in His Saying:

﴿إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقُونَ﴾

'When the hypocrites come to you...' [*Al-Munafiqoon* (63): 1][44]

Also there is the *Hadeeth* of Hind ﷺ, the wife of Abu Sufyaan ﷺ, in which she said to the Prophet ﷺ: "Indeed, Abu Sufyaan is a stingy man."[45]

And also the *Hadeeth* of Faatimah Bint Qays ﷺ, when the Prophet ﷺ said to her (with regard to her accepting marriage proposals from two suitors):

[43] **Translator's Note:** He was the leader of the hypocrites in Madeenah. Upon his death, Allaah revealed Verses commanding the Prophet ﷺ not to pray the funeral prayer over him.

[44] *Bukhaaree*.

[45] *Bukhaaree*.

أَمَّا أَبُو جَهْمٍ فَلَا يَضَعُ عَصَاهُ عَنْ عَاتِقِهِ، وَأَمَّا مُعَاوِيَةُ فَصُعْلُوكٌ لَا مَالَ لَهُ

"As for Mu'awiyah, then he is utterly poor. And as for Abu Jahm, then he does not cease to remove the stick from his shoulder (i.e. he beats his wives)."[46]

What Should One Do When He Hears His *Shaykh*, Friend Or Someone Else Being Backbitten?

Know that it is upon the one who hears a Muslim being backbitten to oppose it and prevent the one doing the backbiting. If he is not able to prevent him with his speech, then he should stop him with his hand. If he is neither able to do so with his hand or with his tongue, then he should get up and leave that gathering. And if he hears his teacher (*Shaykh*) being backbitten – or anyone else who has a right over him, or if the person (being backbitten) is from the people of righteousness and nobility, then his concern with what we have mentioned above should be greater.

Abu Ad-Dardaa ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ رَدَّ عَنْ عِرْضِ أَخِيهِ رَدَّ اللهُ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ النَّارَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"Whoever turns away from (harming) the honour of his brother, Allaah will turn his face away from the Hell-fire on the Day of Judgement."[47]

And it is reported in *Saheeh* Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim from 'Itbaan – or as some say 'Utbaan – in his long and famous

[46] *Muslim.*

[47] *Tirmidhee.*

Hadeeth, in which he narrated: "The Prophet ﷺ stood up to pray, so the people said: 'Where is Maalik bin Ad-Dukhshum?' A man said: 'That hypocrite! Allaah and His Messenger do not love him.' So the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا تَقُلْ ذَلِكَ، أَلَا تَرَاهُ قَدْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، يُرِيدُ بِذَلِكَ وَجْهَ اللهِ

"Do not say that! Do you not see that he says: Laa Ilaaha Illaa Allaah (There is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah), desiring by that, the face of Allaah?"[48]

And it is reported in *Saheeh* Muslim on Al-Hasan Al-Basree that 'Aa'idh bin 'Amr ﷺ, one of the Companions of Allaah's Messenger, entered in the presence of 'Ubaydullaah bin Ziyaad and said: "O my son, indeed I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ say:

إِنَّ شَرَّ الرِّعَاءِ الْحُطَمَةُ، فَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ

'Truly, the most evil of caretakers (leaders) are the oppressive rulers, so beware of being one of them.'"

So he said to him: "Sit down, for you are only from the worthless scraps of the Companions of Muhammad!" So he responded: "Was there any worthless scraps among them? Rather the worthless scraps only appeared after them in others."[49]

Ka'ab bin Maalik ﷺ reported in his long *Hadeeth* concerning his repentance that the Prophet ﷺ said while sitting with some people in Tabook: "What did Ka'ab bin Maalik do?" A man

[48] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[49] *Muslim.*

from Banu Salima said: "O Allaah's Messenger! The (beauty) of his cloak and a self-appreciation of his finery have allured and detained him (i.e. from going to fight in the expedition)!" Upon this, Mu'aadh bin Jabal ﷺ said to him: "What an evil thing you have said! I swear by Allaah, O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, we do not know anything about him except good." So Allaah's Messenger ﷺ remained silent.[50] Mu'aadh bin Anas ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ حَمَى مُؤْمِنًا مِنْ مُنَافِقٍ بَعَثَ اللهُ مَلَكًا يَحْمِي لَحْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَمَنْ رَمَى مُسْلِمًا بِشَيْءٍ يُرِيدُ بِهِ شَيْنَهُ حَبَسَهُ اللهُ عَلَى جِسْرِ جَهَنَّمَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ مِمَّا قَالَ

"Whoever protects a believer from a hypocrite, Allaah will send forth an angel that will protect his flesh on the Day of Judgement from (being burned by) the fire of Hell. And whoever accuses a Muslim of anything, desiring to disgrace him, Allaah will withhold him over the bridge of the Hell-fire until he takes back what he said."[51]

[50] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[51] *Abu Dawood.*

Chapter 4

Expiating Oneself And Repenting From Backbiting

Know that it is required upon everyone that commits a sin to rush towards repenting from it. Repentance with regard to the rights of Allaah must meet three conditions:

1. One must stop committing that sin immediately,

2. He must feel remorse and sorrow for having done it, and

3. He must resolve to not return to committing that sin again.

Repentance with regard to the rights of humans must meet these same three conditions (listed above), as well as a fourth one, and that is:

4. Taking back any oppression that was inflicted on someone or asking for his forgiveness or absolvement from that.

So it is obligatory on a person who has committed backbiting to seek repentance according to these four conditions, because backbiting involves the rights of people, so he must seek the forgiveness of the person he has backbitten.

Is it sufficient for one to just say: "I have backbitten you, so please absolve me from (this) sin" or must he inform him also of what he said about him?

There are two views on this according to the *Shaafi'ee* scholars:

The First: His clarifying what he said (when backbiting) is a condition. So if he is absolved without informing him of what he said, the pardon is not valid, just as if he were to absolve him from (stealing) unidentifiable money.

The Second: His informing him (of what he said) is not a condition, because this is something that one will not be able to tolerate and thus forgive. So his knowing (exactly what was said) is not a condition, contrary to the example of the (stolen) money.

The first opinion is the strongest, since people have the ability to grant forgiveness for certain types of backbiting but not other types.

And if the one who has been backbitten is either dead or absent, then one is excused from seeking to be absolved from it. However, the scholars say: He should supplicate much for that person and ask forgiveness for him, as well as do many good deeds.

Know that it is preferable for the one who has been backbitten to absolve the backbiter from his sin, but it is not an obligation on him to do so. This is because it is giving away and forfeiting one's

right, so the choice is his. However, it is strongly recommended (*Muta'akkidah*) for him to absolve him so that his Muslim brother can be free from the harm of this sin and so that he can be successful in receiving Allaah's great reward of Forgiveness and Love.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِي ٱلسَّرَّآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَٱلْكَـٰظِمِينَ ٱلْغَيْظَ وَٱلْعَافِينَ عَنِ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

"Those who repress their anger and pardon people. Verily, Allaah loves the good doers." [*Aal 'Imraan* (3): 134]

The proper way he should take in making himself allow the pardoning is by reminding himself that: "This matter has already happened and there is no way to remove it now. So it is not right for me to make him miss his chance of getting reward and absolving my Muslim brother."

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ﴾

"And verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives (others), that is truly from the things recommended by Allaah." [*Ash-Shooraa* (42): 43]

And He says:

﴿خُذِ ٱلْعَفْوَ﴾

"Show forgiveness!" [*Al-A'araaf* (7): 199]

The *Ayaat* similar to what we mentioned above are many.

And in the authentic *Hadeeth*, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

وَاللهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

"And Allaah remains in the assistance of (His) servant so long as the servant remains in the assistance of his (fellow) brother."[52]

Ash-Shaafi'ee رحمه الله said: "Whosoever is sought to be pleased, yet is not pleased is a devil." The people of the past would recite: "It was said to me: Such-and-such person has spoken badly of you and when a youth sets out to humiliate, it is a shame. So I said: He has come to us and issued an excuse. The blood-money (i.e. recompense) for a sin – to us – is the apology."

So what we have mentioned here concerning the encouragement for one to absolve and forgive a person from backbiting is what is correct. As for what has been reported on Sa'eed bin Al-Musayyib رضي الله عنه that he said: "I will not forgive the one who has oppressed me" and on Ibn Sireen رحمه الله that he said: "I will not forbid it on him and then make it allowable for him, because Allaah has made backbiting forbidden on him and I am not going to make permissible what Allaah has forbidden, ever" then it is either unauthentic or erroneous.

This is because a person that pardons someone is not making something forbidden permissible. Rather, he is only forfeiting a right that is established for him. The texts of the Qur'aan and the *Sunnah* indicate clearly that it is recommended to forgive and forfeit one's rights, which are specific to this case. Or perhaps Ibn Sireen's words can be taken to mean: "I do not permit myself to be

[52] *Muslim.*

backbit, ever." This would be correct, for indeed if a person says: "I seek my honour back from the one who backbit me", he is not allowing for it to be done. Rather, he is forbidding everyone from backbiting him, just as he forbids others from being backbitten.

As for the *Hadeeth*:

أَيَعْجِزُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ كَأَبِي ضَمْضَمَ، كَانَ إِذَا أَصْبَحَ يَقُولُ: تَصَدَّقْتُ بِعِرْضِي

"Are you not able to be like Abu Damdam – when he would go out from his home, he would say: 'I am giving my honor away in charity for the people.'" [53]

Meaning: I will not seek justice from those who oppress me whether in this world or the Hereafter. This is useful in removing a transgression that existed before the absolvement, but as for what occurs after it, there must be a new absolvement made after that.

And with Allaah lies the success.

-End of the words from Al-Imaam An-Nawaawee-

[53] Collected by Ibn Sunnee, It was graded *Da'eef* by Al-Albaanee in *'Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel*.

Appendix A

Speaking About Allaah without Knowledge

Speaking about Allaah ﷻ, without knowledge, is the foremost aspect of *Shirk*, which incurs the most severe punishment from Allaah ﷻ. For this reason, this is not allowed under any circumstances. This is clearly communicated by Allaah ﷻ in *Surah A'araaf*, which highlights the severity of this sin, by comparing it with other major sins.

He ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ﴾

"Say: The things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are, *Al-Fawaahish* (every kind of illegal sexual intercourse) whether committed openly or secretly..."

He ﷻ then moved on to describe a more severe sin:

﴿وَٱلۡإِثۡمَ وَٱلۡبَغۡيَ بِغَيۡرِ ٱلۡحَقِّ﴾

"...sin, unjust oppression..."

Then to that sin which is even more severe:

﴿وَأَن تُشۡرِكُواْ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمۡ يُنَزِّلۡ بِهِۦ سُلۡطَٰنٗا﴾

"...joining partners (in worship) with Allaah (*Shirk*), for which He gave no authority..."

And then He, the All-Knowing punctuates it with that sin which is most severe:

﴿وَأَن تَقُولُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ﴾

"...and saying things about Allaah of which you have no knowledge." [*Al-A'araaf* (7): 33]

In the *Tafseer* of this *Aayah*, the scholars of Islaam have said that:

"If speaking about Islaam (Allaah ﷻ) is not the greatest crime, then Allaah ﷻ certainly intended to emphasize it that way. *Zinaa* (fornication and adultery), the first mentioned (sin in the *Aayah*) is an act of one committing a sin on his/her own soul.

Secondly: (Allaah ﷻ mentions) oppression, a sin committed against others. This is definitely a greater evil. Then He ﷻ mentions *Shirk* (i.e. joining partners in worship with Allaah), obviously a greater evil than the first two, and finally, speaking without knowledge in Islaam.

Every sin that followed was always greater than the previous one. Thus, if it (speaking about Allaah ﷻ without

knowledge) is not the greatest of sins, as it was mentioned last, it was certainly intended (by Allaah ﷻ) to be understood that way."

It should be seriously noted that this very grave sin is only because of Satan's encouragement of the ignorant and sometimes arrogant seekers of name and fame.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوٓءِ وَالْفَحْشَآءِ وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"Verily, it is indeed (*Shaytaan*) that makes you do evil and say things about Allaah (or His *Deen*) of which you have no proper knowledge." [*Al-Baqarah* (2): 169]

Therefore, based upon the above *Aayah*, we find that this is the most serious prohibition with Allaah ﷻ Himself. The following categories of sins are incorporated in "Speaking of Allaah without knowledge":

a) Lying upon Allaah ﷻ.

b) Attributing to Allaah ﷻ what is not suitable for Him

c) *Bid'ah* (innovation) or modifying and altering Allaah's *Deen*

d) Negating what He ﷻ has affirmed

e) Affirming what He ﷻ negated

f) Hostility to those who champion His cause

g) Supporting His enemies

h) Loving those whom He hates and hating those He loves

i) Describing Him with what does not befit Him in His Essence, His Attributes, His Statements or His Actions.

Therefore, because of the amount of sins included in this category, there can be no greater prohibition. It is from this sin that *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah) and all forms of *Kufr* (disbelief) originate. All forms of *Bid'ah* (innovations) are also founded upon "speaking about Allaah without knowledge." Some aspects of "Speaking about Allaah without knowledge" are explained in details below:

1. Lying upon Allaah ﷻ and/or His Messenger ﷺ

Allaah ﷻ informs us that it is not allowed to follow anything without knowledge. He ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا﴾

"And follow not, (O man i.e. do not say, act or witness) that of which you have no knowledge. Verily! The hearing, and the sight and the heart of each of those ones will be questioned." [*Al-Israa* (17): 36]

And He ﷻ also warns us not to speak about Him without knowledge:

﴿وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"...and saying things about Allaah of which you have no knowledge." [*Al-A'araaf* (7): 33]

In the above *Aayah*, Allaah ﷻ is telling us that He has forbidden Muslims to speak about Him without knowledge, and lying upon Allaah ﷻ is one way of doing this. The one who lies about Allaah ﷻ is not only guilty of speaking about Him without knowledge, but also he is amongst the most oppressive of people as Allaah

ﷻ Himself describes:

﴿فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِهِۦٓ﴾

"And who is more oppressive than he who lies against Allaah, or who denies His signs..." [*Al-A' araaf* (7): 37]

Besides that, He, the Wise, also describes the punishment, on the Day of Judgment, for anyone who involves themselves in this dangerous practice, thus:

﴿وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ تَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ﴾

"And you will see on the Day of Judgment, those who lie upon Allaah, their faces blackened." [*Az-Zumar* (39): 60]

Ibn Al-Jawzee, in his *Tafseer* said:

"Many scholars of Islaam are of the opinion, that lying upon Allaah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ is disbelief, and that it takes one out of Islaam (i.e. it makes him a difsbeliever). Lying upon the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ is similarly serious, since indirectly it is lying upon Allaah ﷻ. The Messenger ﷺ emphasizing the severity of lying upon himself ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

"Whoever knowingly lie upon me, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire."[54]

Many Muslims would tell you that stealing, bribery, killing, adultery etc. are all prohibited (*Haraam*) acts. However, when it comes to lying upon Allaah ﷻ and/or His Messenger ﷺ they are

[54] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

not even aware that such a sin exists, and so they would indulge in it freely without worry. This complacency among Muslims regarding this sin comes about because of the great ignorance that prevails concerning

i) the rights of Allaah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ and

ii) the serious punishment that results from indulging in sin.

This complacent attitude, coupled with ignorance, has been the main factors for the majority of the deviations and differences found in Islaam.

Various ways in which lying upon Allaah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ are manifested.

a) Describing Allaah without proof from the Qur'aan or authentic *Sunnah*

For example, describing Allaah ﷻ as being everywhere is a serious misconception of which many Muslims are guilty. The Qur'aan and authentic *Sunnah* are both replete with proofs which show that Allaah ﷻ is above and beyond His creation, and not a part of it, as the statement that 'He, is everywhere' necessitates. The following *Hadeeth* clearly indicate this.

Mu'aawiyah bin Al- Hakim said: "I had a servant girl who used to tend to my sheep in the area of Mount Uhud, near a place called Al-Jawwaareeyah. One day I came to see them only to find that a wolf had made off with a sheep from her flock. Since, I, like the rest of Adam's descendants, am prone to do regrettable acts, I gave her a terrible slap on her face. When I came to Allaah's Messenger ﷺ with the story, he considered it a grave thing for me to have done. I said: 'O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ couldn't I free her? He replied:

ادْعُهَا إِلَيَّ

"Bring her to me."

So I brought her. He then asked her,

أَيْنَ اللهُ

"Where is Allaah?"

And she replied: "Above the sky." Then he asked her:

وَمَنْ أَنَا

"Who am I?"

She replied: "You are Allaah's Messenger." So he said:

أَعْتِقْهَا فَإِنَّهَا مُؤْمِنَةٌ

"Free her; for she is a believer."[55]

It must be noted that one of the duties of the Messenger ﷺ was to correct any mistakes anyone committed in this religion (*Deen*). His silence after asking her, *"Where is Allaah?"* and she replied "Above the sky", is an indication that her answer is correct. His affirming that she is a believer, at the end of the *Hadeeth*, is the direct proof that her answers were correct, otherwise he would be lying, and we seek refuge with Allaah ﷻ for even thinking that lying is possible from the Messenger ﷺ.

What should be noted, is the fact that the first question he asked her was: Where is Allaah? and not if she believed in Him,

[55] *Muslim.*

the Most High. Since the question was: *'Where is Allaah?'* great importance and attention must be given to the fact that, since he accepted that Allaah ﷻ is above the skies as the correct answer, that this is direct proof that this is the correct view on the question.

Additionally, it establishes the importance of the issue in Islaam, contrary to the belief and attitude of many Muslims, even so-called *Shaykhs*, who claim that the issue is either trivial or too advanced. After all, this was the first question the Prophet ﷺ asked of a slave girl to determine if she was a Muslim or not!

b) Explaining the *Aayaat* of the Qur'aan, or the *Hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ with meanings other than their apparent ones, is also another way of lying upon Allaah ﷻ.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿قَالَ يَٰٓإِبۡلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسۡجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقۡتُ بِيَدَيَّۖ﴾

"(Allaah) said: 'O Iblees (*Shaytaan*)! What prevents you from prostrating yourself to one whom I have created with both My Hands...'" [*Saad* (38): 75]

In the above *Aayah*, Allaah ﷻ is saying that He created Aadam with His Two Hands. Yet some Muslims try to explain "Allaah's two Hands" to mean His power. Who knows Allaah ﷻ better, Himself or these people? As Muslims, we have to believe in Allaah ﷻ as He describes Himself or as His Messenger ﷺ described Him. Therefore, if He ﷻ says he has Two Hands, we must believe that. However, we must also believe, that they are not hands like our: He, the Sublime says:

﴿لَيۡسَ كَمِثۡلِهِۦ شَيۡءٞۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡبَصِيرُ﴾

"There is nothing like Him; and He is the Hearer; the Seer of all." [*Ash-Shooraa* (42): 11]

c) Making *Haraam* things *Halaal*

This is another form of lying upon Allaah. An example of this is telling Muslims to get out of the *Masjid*. Since some of our brothers pray according to the way demonstrated by the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. according to the *Sunnah*), some administrators order them out of the *Masjid* just because of that. These arrogant leaders should remember, that amongst the greatest of oppressors, are those who prevent a Muslim from praying in the *Masjid* of Allaah.

This is because they are making *Haraam* the most *Halaal* of deeds, purely out of their unlawful dictatorship. Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ أَن يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ وَسَعَىٰ فِى خَرَابِهَآ﴾

"And who is more unjust than those who forbid that Allaah's Name should be remembered in His Mosques, and strive after its destruction..." [*Al-Baqarah* (2): 114]

d) Making *Halaal* things *Haraam*

This is also another way in which Muslims lie upon Allaah ﷻ. An example of this is that Allaah ﷻ permits a Muslim man to marry and have up to four wives, at any given time. However, if anyone attaches conditions, and throws doubt on this, he/she is in fact making something that is *Halaal, Haraam*. This is done by Muslims saying that a man can only marry once, and if the circumstances of necessity present itself, then the law of polygyny (i.e. a man marrying more than one wife) becomes applicable.

Allaah, the All-Knowing says:

﴿فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَـٰثَ وَرُبَـٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ ۚ﴾

"...then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three or four, but if you shall not be able to deal justly (with them) then many only one, (or the captives) that your right hands possess..." [*An-Nisaa'* (4): 3]

In the above *Aayah*, Allaah ﷻ, the Wise has legislated that a man may marry 2, 3 or 4 wives, but if he was afraid of treating them unjustly, that is, he would not be able to keep up a balanced scale of equitable treatment, then the alternative is to marry only one. This, and only this, is the condition set down by the *Sharee'ah*. Anyone trying to say that there are other conditions is inventing his own law. Those who propagate that the first wife must be barren or sick, or that she has to approve of the second marriage, etc., have no evidence at all to support their false claims.

Even worst, are those who have adopted the orientalists' opinion, that polygyny is a lustful act. Thus, anyone whose wife is otherwise perfect, but he still takes a second wife, is, in the orientalists' view, doing this only out of evil lust and desires. This category is worst, because their statement is blasphemy against the Qur'aan, since Allaah ﷻ, the Wise, promotes and encourages therein, that a man can be married to more than one woman at any given time. It is also blasphemy to the Prophet ﷺ, his Companions, and the scholars of Islaam, as they practiced it during their lifetime.

However, even if it were done purely for lust or desire, it would still be according to the *Sunnah*, since the Messenger of Allaah

ﷺ informs us, that when someone satisfies his sexual cravings or lust in a *Halaal* way, he will be blessed for it. He states:

وَفِي بُضْعِ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ

"...and even when one of you cohabits (engage in sexual intercourse), he is rewarded for it."

We (the Companions) said: "O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ! Would one of us earn blessings and rewards for satisfying his (sexual) lusts and desires?" He said:

أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ وَضَعَهَا فِي حَرَامٍ؛ أَكَانَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا وِزْرٌ؟
فَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا وَضَعَهَا فِي الْحَلَالِ؛ كَانَ لَهُ أَجْرٌ

"Yes, don't you see that if he was to satisfy it in the Haraam way (by adultery and fornication) that he would be sinned? Similarly, when he satisfies it in the Halaal way, he is rewarded."[56]

e) Using fabricated and unauthentic *Ahaadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ is another way of lying on Allaah and His Messenger ﷺ.

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

"Whoever knowingly lie upon me, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire (of Hell)."[57]

[56] *Muslim.*

[57] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ also said:

مَنْ حَدَّثَ عَنِّي بِحَدِيثٍ يَرَى أَنَّهُ كَذِبٌ فَهُوَ أَحَدُ الْكَاذِبِينَ

"Whoever relates a Hadeeth about me, knowing it to be in-authentic, is himself a liar."[58]

2. Another aspect of speaking about Allaah ﷻ without knowledge is: Making legal decisions (giving *Fataawaa*) in Allaah's religion without knowledge.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"...and saying things about Allaah of which you have no knowledge." [*Al-A' araaf* (7): 33]

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يُبْقِ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُسَاءَ جُهَّالًا فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا

"Indeed Allaah, the All-Mighty will not take away knowledge by snatching it away from the people but by taking the lives of the knowledgeable people, until when not one scholar remains. The people will then take ignorant people as their leaders, who they will ask to give judgments (in Allaah's religion). This they will do without knowledge. This will result

[58] *Ibn Majah.*

in their going astray, and leading others astray."[59]

How many Muslims are not in this sad state today? Furthermore, how many rulings and legal decisions are given without knowledge? May Allaah ﷻ save us from this dangerous situation in which we find ourselves.

It is strange that when it comes to secular knowledge, we are so respectful. How many of us would dare speak of medicine in front of a doctor, or dentistry in front of a dentist? Yet we speak about Allaah's laws, and make rulings in His religion ignorantly. Are we not aware that He hears us? What should scare people who involve in this great sin is the following statement of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ:

«أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ قَتَلَ نَبِيًّا أَوْ قَتَلَهُ نَبِيٌّ، أَوْ رَجُلٌ يُضِلُّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ»

"Among the people who will receive the most severe punishment on the Day of Judgment is a person who killed a Prophet, or who was killed by a Prophet, or a person who because of his ignorance, misguides people..."[60]

What is even more severe and should discourage them even more is the fact that they will carry the burden of everyone who is misguided because of them. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

وَمَنْ سَنَّ فِي الإِسْلَامِ سُنَّةً سَيِّئَةً كَانَ عَلَيْهِ وِزْرُهَا وَوِزْرُ مَنْ عَمِلَ بِهَا

[59] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[60] *Ahmad & At-Tabaraanee.*

"...whoever introduces a bad way which others follow, he will have its burden and the burden of every one who acts upon it..."[61]

3. Another aspect of speaking about Allaah without knowledge is: Ruling by other than what was revealed by Allaah.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ﴾

"And whoever rules by other than by what Allaah revealed, those are disbelievers." [*Al-Maa'idah* (5): 44]

Allaah ﷻ further states in the Qur'aan:

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا﴾

"...by your Lord (Allaah), they can have no faith until they make you (Muhammad ﷺ the judge in all their dispute amongst themselves, and thereafter find no resistance against your decisions, but accept with full submission." [*An-Nisaa'* (4): 65]

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن يَقُولُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۚ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are

[61] *Saheeh At-Tagheeb Wat Tarheeb- Al Mudhiree.*

called to Allaah and His Messenger to judge between them, is that they say: "We hear and we obey" – and such are the successful." [*An Noor* (24): 51]

Ruling by other than what Allaah ﷻ has revealed is indeed one of the most severe types of disbelief to which the tongue can fall prey. So, we should be very careful about this.

Be aware that ruling by other than Allaah's law is not only for the people who are in governmental positions, although it is easiest for them to fall prey to this, but each person is liable, based upon his responsibility, as is explained in the following *Hadeeth*:

أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالإِمَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْؤُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّجُلِ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْهُ، أَلَا فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْؤُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

"Each one of you is a guardian, and each person is answerable for his flock (those under his charge); so the Imaam is guardian and he is answerable for his flock (his people), the man is guardian of his family and he is answerable for his flock (his family), and the woman is guardian in the house of her husband and she is answerable for her flock (in his house)... and each one of you is a guardian and (responsible for his flock)."[62]

[62] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

Since most decisions and rulings are generally communicated through speaking, then making *Haraam* rulings would constitute misuse of the tongue.

So know, that making *Halaal* what Allaah ﷻ has made *Haraam* and making *Haraam* what Allaah ﷻ has made *Halaal*, or accepting the ruling and following someone who is involved in it, is a type of *Kufr* (disbelief). This is clearly understood from the following *Hadeeth*:

'Adi bin Haatim ؓ came to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and heard him recite the following *Aayah*:

﴿ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَـٰنَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ﴾

"They took their rabbis and monks as Lord besides Allaah."

So he said: "Messenger of Allaah! They never used to worship them. He said:

بَلَى، أَلَيْسَ يُحِلُّونَ لَكُمْ مَا حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتُحِلُّونَهُ، وَيُحَرِّمُونَ مَا أَحَلَّ اللهُ لَكُمْ فَتُحَرِّمُونَهُ؟! فَقُلْتُ: بَلَى. فَقَالَ: تِلْكَ عِبَادَتُهُمْ.

"Verily, they have made Haraam (unlawful) what was Halaal (lawful), and they made halaal (lawful) what was Haraam (prohibited) and (the people) followed them – so that was their (the people) worship of them (the rabbis and monks)."[63]

4. Another aspect of speaking about Allaah without knowledge is: *Bid'ahs* (innovations)

[63] *Tirmidhee.*

Bid'ah is changing any aspect of worship in Allaah's *Deen* by either adding to it, subtracting from it or altering it in any way. It is for this reason that the noble scholars of this *Deen* expended so much time to warn this *Ummah* about the great *Fitnah* (trial) of innovation. This is because the dangers of *Bid`ah*, and its destructive effects upon this *Deen*, are much greater than that of the other major sins, as is explained from the following *Aayaat* and *Ahaadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ:

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to the people) if you love Allaah then follow me, Allaah will love you and He will forgive your sins." [*Aal-'Imraan* (3): 31]

The Messenger ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَحْدَثَ فِي أَمْرِنَا هَذَا مَا لَيْسَ مِنْهُ فَهُوَ رَدٌّ

"Whoever innovates in this matter of ours, that which is not from it, will have it rejected."[64]

And he said:

فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ، تَمَسَّكُوا بِهَا وَعَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِذِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحْدَثَاتِ الأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلَّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ وَكُلَّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ

[64] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

"...And hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs, and beware of newly-invented matters (Bid'ah); for every newly-invented matter is misguidance which leads to the fire."[65]

So, based upon the above *Ahaadeeth*, Muslims must be aware of all matters that are not established from the *Sharee'ah*. The following saying of the Messenger ﷺ is even more frightening. He said:

إِنَّ اللهَ حَجَبَ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ كُلِّ صَاحِبِ بِدْعَةٍ حَتَّى يَدَعَ بِدْعَتَهُ

"Allaah does not accept the repentance of anyone involved in Bid'ah, until he leaves it off completely."[66]

Brothers and sisters, let us not close off the doors of repentance with our own hands, by indulging in and/or propogating *Bid'ah*. However, we must know that, even worse for the practitioner of *Bid'ah*, is what the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَبَى اللهُ أَنْ يَقْبَلَ عَمَلَ صَاحِبِ بِدْعَةٍ حَتَّى يَدَعَ بِدْعَتَهُ

"Allaah refuses to accept the deeds of the practitioner of Bid'ah (innovations in the deen) until he leaves his innovation (Bid'ah)."[67]

Bid'ah is one of the most dangerous sins that send whoever

[65] *Ahmad*. The concluding part of the *hadeeth* as underlined above is found in the *Hadeeth* of *Khutbah Al-Haajah* with which the Prophet ﷺ usually starts his talk as contained in *Sunan An-Nasaa'ee* and *Saheeh Ibn Al-Khuzaymah*. It was graded *Saheeh* by Al-Albaanee.

[66] *At-Tabaraanee* and it is authentic.

[67] Ibn Majah & Ibn Abi 'Aatim. The *Hadeeth* was graded *Munkar* by Al-Albaanee in *Silsilah Al-ahaadeeth Ad-Da'eefah*, vol. 3.

practices it into the fire (of Hell). Such action from a Muslim is most loved by *Shaytaan*. This is because the Muslim involved in *Bid'ah* feels that he is doing something good, but, in effect, it causes Allaah's wrath to descend upon him. A few examples of Innovation (*Bid'ah*) of the tongue are as follows:

a) *Bid'ah* in Belief

The statement that Allaah is everywhere, as was discussed before. (And similar statements like the saying that the Qur'aan is created, etc.)

b) *Bid'ah* in *Dhikr* (Remembrance of Allaah)

Doing *Dhikr* in congregation behind one person, which is a common practise of the Sufis. The following narration beautifully clarifies the evil of such a practice.

Amr bin Salmah reported:

We used to sit at the door of 'Abdullaah bin Mas'oud before the morning prayer, so that when he came out, we would walk with him to the mosque. One day Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'aree came to us and said: "Has Abu 'Abdur Rahmaan (Ibn Mas`oud ) come out yet?" We replied: "No!" So he sat down with us until he came out. When he came out we all stood along with him, so Abu Moosaa said to him: "O Aba `Abdir Rahmaan ! I have just seen something in the mosque which I deemed to be evil, but all Praise is for Allaah, I did not see anything except good." He (Ibn Mas'oud) inquired: "Then what is it?"

(Abu Moosaa) replied: "If you live you will see it. I saw in the mosque people sitting in circles awaiting the prayer. In each circle they had pebbles in their hands and a man would say: repeat *Allaahu Akbar* a hundred times. Then so they

would repeat it a hundred. Then he would say: Say *Laa illaha illallaah* a hundred times. So they would say it a hundred times. Then he would say: Say *Subhaanallaah* a hundred times. So they would say it a hundred times. (Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ) asked: "What did you say to to them?" (Abu Moosaa ﷺ) said: "I did not say anything to them. Instead I waited to hear your view or what you declared."

(Ibn Mas`oud ﷺ) replied: "Would that you had ordered them to count up the evil deeds they acquired and assured them that their good deeds would not be lost!" Then we went along with him (Ibn Mas`oud ﷺ) until he came to one of these circles and stood and said: "What is this that I see you doing?" They replied: "O Aba `Abdur Rahmaan ﷺ! These are pebbles upon which we are counting, *Takbeer, Tahleel* and *Tasbeeh*."

He (Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ) said: "Count up your evil deeds! I assure you that none of your good deeds will be lost. Woe to you, O *Ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ! How quickly you go to destruction! These are the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who are widespread. These are his clothes that have not yet decayed and his bowl which is unbroken. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you are upon a religion better guided than the religion of Muhammad ﷺ or you are opening the door of misguidance." They said: "O Aba `Abdir Rahmman! By Allaah, we only intended good." He (Ibn Mas`oud ﷺ) said: "How many are there who intend good but do not achieve it. Indeed Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said to us: "A people will recite the Qur'aan but it will not pass beyond their throats." Then he left them."

'Umar bin Salamah (the sub-narrator) said: "We saw most of these people fighting against us on the day of Nahrawaan,

along with the Khawaarij."[68]

It should be observed from the above incident involving Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ and the people who were making their congregational (*Soofie* like) *Dhikr*, that they were:

i) in the right place (i.e. the *Masjid*),

ii) saying the right and prescribed *Dhikr -Tasbeeh, Takbeer*, etc.

iii) doing it at the right time, that is before, or according to some narrations, after the *Salaah*.

However, it was only one difference that caused Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ to reject and rebuke what they were doing–HOW they did it, that is, in congregation. And also counting the pebbles since this contradicts the saying and practice of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ. This emphasizes the importance of following the *Sunnah* with precision in every possible way.

The following example further highlights the importance of doing any act of worship, especially *Dhikr* or *Du'aa'* .exactly and precisely as was demonstrated by the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ.

Both Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim narrated the *hadeeth* that the Prophet ﷺ taught Al-Baraa bin`Aazib ﷺ a *Du'aa'* to use before sleeping, part of which was: "*...Aa-man-tu bi ki-taa-bi-kal la-zhee an-zalt, wa bi na-biy-yi-kal la-zhee ar-salt...*" However, when Al-Baraa ﷺ repeated it to the Prophet ﷺ, he said: "*...wa bi ra-soo-li-kal la-zhee arsalt...*" The Prophet ﷺ immediately corrected him saying: "*No!*"[69]

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[68] *Ad-Darimee* and it is authentic.

[69] Narrated by Al Bara bin Azib ﷺ: Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to me:

This shows the importance of adhering to the *Sunnah*, and not even changing a single word, which in essence has the same meaning as the substituted word (i.e. *Nabee* means Prophet and *Rasool* means Messenger and both are titles given to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ by Allaah ﷻ).

c) *Bid'ah* of *Du'aa'* in Congregation

A widespread practise amongst Muslims is making *Du`aa'* in

إِذَا أَتَيْتَ مَضْجَعَكَ فَتَوَضَّأْ وُضُوءَكَ لِلصَّلَاةِ، ثُمَّ اضْطَجِعْ عَلَى شِقِّكَ الأَيْمَنِ، ثُمَّ قُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْلَمْتُ نَفْسِي إِلَيْكَ، وَوَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِي إِلَيْكَ، وَفَوَّضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَيْكَ، وَأَلْجَأْتُ ظَهْرِي إِلَيْكَ، رَغْبَةً وَرَهْبَةً إِلَيْكَ، لَا مَنْجَا وَلَا مَلْجَأَ مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ، آمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْتَ وَنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلْتَ، فَإِنْ مِتَّ مِنْ لَيْلَتِكَ فَأَنْتَ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ وَاجْعَلْهُنَّ آخِرَ مَا تَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ. قَالَ: فَرَدَدْتُهَا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فَلَمَّا بَلَغْتُ آمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْتَ قُلْتُ: وَرَسُولِكَ

"When you want to go to bed, perform ablution as you do for prayer, then lie down on your right side and say: 'Allahumma aslamtu wajhi ilayka, wa fauwadtu Amri ilayka wa aljatu zahri ilayka, raghbatan wa rahbatan ilayka, lamalja'a wa la manna minka illa ilayka. Amantu bikitabi kalladhi anzalta wa bi nabiyyikal-ladhi arsalta'. *If you should die then (after reciting this) you will die on the religion of Islam (i.e., as a Muslim); so let these words be the last you say (before going to bed)." While I was memorizing it, I said,* "Wa birasulikal-ladhi arsalta *(in Your Messenger whom You have sent)."*
The Prophet ﷺ said:

وَنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلْتَ

"No, but say: ***Wa binabiyyi-kalladhi arsalta*** *(in Your Prophet whom You have sent)."* (*Bukhaaree*)

congregation after the *Fard* (compulsory) *Salaah*. This practice, in fact, does not have any proof from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ or the companions who led *Salaah* all their lives but never once made a congregational *Du'aa'* after the *Salaah*.

Of the many innovations of the tongue, these few examples will suffice.

The majority of Muslims are deeply involved in many innovations. However, we must realize that Allaah ﷻ can only be worshipped with what He ﷻ has legislated, and that it must be performed as precisely as possible as was explained or shown to us by the Prophet ﷺ and as it was understood by the pious predecessors (the Companions).

Therefore, before doing anything in this *Deen*, a Muslim must enquire about the proof for that action from Qur'aan and authentic *Sunnah*, or whether it was something practiced by our pious predecessors from among the Companions, the *Taabi'een* and the *Tabi' Tabi'een*. If there is no precedent from them, then it is compulsory for us to leave it. May Allaah guide us to practise Islaam in its pristine purity. *Ameen*.

Appendix B

Committing *Shirk* Through the Tongue

Shirk refers to assigning a partner or partners with Allaah in whatever form it may take, and it is the opposite of worshipping Allaah alone. This act of associating partners with Allaah is (one of) the most dangerous sins in which a Muslim can be involved. In fact, if someone dies in such a state, then he/she will not be forgiven by Allaah. May Allaah protect us from all types of *Shirk*. *Aameen*.

About *Shirk*, Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ﴾

"Indeed Allaah does not forgive *Shirk* (that you associate any partners with Him), but He forgives other than that to whom He pleases." [*An Nisaa* (4): 48]

He, the Sublime says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلشِّرۡكَ لَظُلۡمٌ عَظِيمٞ﴾

"Indeed *Shirk* is the greatest oppression." [*Luqman* (31): 13]

Allaah ﷻ also says:

﴿إِنَّهُۥ مَن يُشۡرِكۡ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدۡ حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ وَمَأۡوَىٰهُ ٱلنَّارُۖ﴾

"...Indeed he who associates partners in worship with Allaah, then Allaah has forbidden *Jannah* (Paradise) for him, and the Fire (of Hell) will be his abode." [*Al-Maa'idah* (5): 72]

In addition to that, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَلَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ الْكَبَائِرِ؟

"Shall I not inform you about the greatest of sins?"

We said: "Surely, O Messenger of Allaah." He said:

الإِشْرَاكُ بِاللهِ

"Associating partners (Shirk) *with Allaah..."*[70]

Proofs indicating the dangers of *shirk* (associating partners with Allaah) from the Qur'aan and authentic *Sunnah* are numerous, but the above reference would suffice. *Shirk* is a very extensive subject about which most Muslims are ignorant. However, a sin that Allaah does not forgive definitely needs serious attention, because *Shaytaan* would work assiduously to get us to concern ourselves with smaller issues, thinking that we are saved, but

[70] *Bukhaaree* & *Muslim.*

causes us to practice *Shirk*.

Ponder on what Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَٰلًا ○ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا﴾

"Say, (O Muhammad ﷺ) Shall We not tell you (who are) the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds. Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds." [*Al-Kahf* (18): 103- 104]

Allaah, the Sublime, says:

﴿لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ﴾

"And if you commit *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah) all of your works would be in vain (destroyed) and you will definitely be among those who are the losers." [*Az-Zumar* (39): 65]

It is reasonable to conclude that unless we, as Muslims, know clearly what is *Shirk*, then we are likely to become ready victims of it. And if we are in *Shirk* (may Allaah save us from this plight), then, based upon the above statements of Allaah ﷻ, about which there is no doubt, all of our works would be destroyed and we would be from among the losers, although we may think we are not doing anything wrong.

Brother and sisters, let us make more sincere effort to know our *Deen*, and not just assume that, because Allaah is All-forgiving, that we would get His forgiveness. We must remember also, that He is swift in punishment. Forgiveness has to be earned, and it is

not given to someone just because he carries a Muslim name, or says he is Muslim. It is earned by striving. Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَسَارِعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ﴾

"...and strive all-together for the forgiveness from your Lord..." [*Aal 'Imraan* (3): 133]

The grave sin, *Shirk*, like acts of worship, can be done with the heart, the tongue, or the limbs. However, we will only deal with those aspects of *Shirk* which are committed by the tongue herein.

Supplicating to Other Than Allaah

He, the Glorious, says:

﴿ٱدۡعُونِيٓ أَسۡتَجِبۡ لَكُمۡۚ﴾

"Supplicate to Me and I will answer you..." [*Ghaafir* (40): 60]

The Messenger ﷺ said:

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ

"Du'aa' (supplication) is worship itself."[71]

Since *Du'aa'* is the essence and main element of worship, as it is the seeking of help from a supernatural source, it must be directed to the Creator and Sustainer, Allaah ﷻ Himself. It is precisely for this reason that, Allaah, the Sublime, warns:

[71] *Abu Dawood.*

﴿وَلَا تَدْعُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ ۖ فَإِن فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ﴾

"And supplicate not to any other than Allaah, that which can neither profit nor harm you, but if you do so, then certainly you will be from among the transgressors." [*Yunus* (10): 106]

Yet, we would find Muslims going to graves of seemingly pious people, supplicating to them to fulfil their needs. It is also commonplace for some Muslims to make *Du'aa'* through the name of the Prophet ﷺ as well as other righteous people. However, all supplications must be directed towards Allaah, Alone. To do otherwise constitutes *Shirk*, – pure and simple.

Kufr Ni'mah: Disbelief Manifesting Itself in Ungratefulness for Allaah's Blessings or Favours.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ﴾

"They recognize the bounty (blessings) of Allaah, yet they deny it and most of them are disbelievers." [*An-Nahl* (16): 83]

Instead of praising Allaah ﷻ for the bounties He bestows upon us, we deny them and sometimes feel it is by our own hands that we have achieved whatever Allaah ﷻ has blessed us with. The correct attitude would be to acknowledge, that all that we have is only from Allaah ﷻ, the Almighty. This should help us to feel less independent, and make us more grateful to Allaah ﷻ, the Sublime. This, in turn, will cause us to receive more of Allaah's blessing (*Inshaa Allaah*).

He, the Glorious says:

﴿لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ﴾

"And if you are thankful, I will increase (My blessings) to you." [*Ibraheem* (14): 7]

Visiting Fortunetellers; Psychics; etc.

The Messenger ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَصَدَّقَهُ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا

"Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and asks him anything, Allaah will not accept his Prayers for forty days."[72]

This is the punishment for going to him and seeking his help. However, if a Muslim believes in what the fortune-teller says, the harm is even greater. The Messenger ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا أَوْ كَاهِنًا فَصَدَّقَهُ بِمَا يَقُولُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

"Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and believes in what he says, has disbelieved in what was brought by Muhammad (i.e. Islaam)."[73]

This *Hadeeth* clearly declares, that to believe anything from the fortune-teller is disbelief. These experts at deception have

[72] *Muslim.*

[73] *Ahmad.*

deceived many people, and extracted from them much wealth. Yet, many Muslims frequent them. May Allaah assist and guide us from such practitioners of evil.

Swearing By Other Than Allaah

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَنْهَاكُمْ أَنْ تَحْلِفُوا بِآبَائِكُمْ فَمَنْ كَانَ حَالِفًا فَلْيَحْلِفْ بِاللهِ أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

"Allaah prohibits you from swearing by your fathers, so whoever swears, let him swear by Allaah or shut up."[74]

It is stated in another *Hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ that:

مَنْ حَلَفَ بِغَيْرِ اللهِ فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ

"Whoever swears by other than Allaah has committed Shirk."[75]

Swearing is allowed in Islaam, but a person can only swear by Allaah ﷻ. If he swears by anything else, then this is an aspect of *Shirk*. To swear by the moon or the star or any of Allaah's creation, is *Haraam*. What is even more heinous is to swear by Allaah ﷻ while knowing fully well that one is lying. Allaah ﷻ can swear by whatever He wants to, but we can only swear by Him.

[74] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[75] *Ahmad.*

Denying a Name or Description of Allaah or Changing its Apparent Meaning

This occurs when someone denies any Name or Attribute of Allaah that He affirmed for Himself, or that His Messenger ﷺ affirmed for Him, the Most High. For example, to deny or cast doubt on the fact that Allaah has Two Hands, or that He hears, or that He is above the heavens, are aspects of *Shirk* which fall within this category. To seek to explain the Hands of Allaah as His Mercy, Strength, Power, etc., falls into the above category also. This type of explaining of Allaah's Attributes is also prohibited in Islaam.

It must be noted that the belief of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah* regarding Allaah's Names and Attributes is:

"That Muslims must believe in all of Allaah's Names and all of His Attributes that are found in the Qur'aan and the authentic *Sunnah*. They must accept them exactly and literally as they are."

The above demands the following:

a) Not seeking to explain any of them by similitude (i.e. by saying for example that Allaah's Hands are just like the hands of mankind).

b) Not seeking to explain "How it is" (i.e. by seeking to explain, for example, how Allaah ﷻ is established above His Throne).

c) Not declaring it to be figurative language and not literal (i.e. by saying, for example, that the meaning of 'the Hand of Allaah is with the *Jamaa'ah*' means 'His Mercy or Blessings and not literally Hand'. Or to say that Allaah ﷻ does not have Hands or a Face because these are human or animalistic characteristics, and thus the "Hands" and "Face" is figurative and not literal).

Appendix C

Misuse of the Tongue

There are several ways by which the tongue is misused. Such misuses may not be sins in and of themselves, however, they will lead to sins if the believer's tongue persists in them. From such misuses are:

Speaking about things that there is no need with which to concern oneself

Know that the most precious wealth of an *'Abd* (servant of Allaah) is his time. Thus, whenever he expends it on that which does not concern him, then he is wasting his most valuable asset. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ

"Part of someone's being a good Muslim is leaving alone

that which does not concern him."[76]

One of the reasons that pushes someone to get involved in speaking about things which does not concern him, is his desire to know that which there is no need to know or being satisfied with talking about things that have no benefit.

The cure for this is to be aware that every second of one's life is part of his most precious wealth, and that his tongue is a net with which he should hunt for good deeds. Being neglectful of this important fact will only lead to great losses in the Hereafter.[77]

Giving false testimonies or bearing false witness

Among the other blatant misuse of the tongue is witnessing to falsehood or bearing false witness.

Allaah ﷻ says:

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[76] *Tirmidhee.*

[77] Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ and Abu Burazah ﷺ reported that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمَا ابْنِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ القِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ خَمْسٍ: عَنْ عُمُرِهِ فِيمَا أَفْنَاهُ، وَعَنْ شَبَابِهِ فِيمَا أَبْلَاهُ، وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ، وَفِيمَا أَنْفَقَهُ، وَمَاذَا عَمِلَ فِيمَا عَلِمَ؟

"A human being's feet will not depart from before his Lord, on the Day of Resurrection, until he is questioned about five things:

1. *His life time - how did he consume it?*
2. *His youth and body – how did he utilize it?*
3. *His wealth – how did he earn it,*
4. *And how did he spend it?*
5. *And what did he do in regard to what he knew?"* (*Tirmidhee*)

﴿وَٱجۡتَنِبُواْ قَوۡلَ ٱلزُّورِ﴾

"...And shun lying speech (false statement)." [*Al-Hajj* (22): 30]

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَلَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ الْكَبَائِرِ؟

"Shall I not inform you about the greatest of sins."

We said: "Most assuredly" He said:

الإِشْرَاكُ بِاللهِ وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ

"Shirk! (associating partners) with Allaah ﷻ, ungratefulness to parents',

he was reclining but now sat up and said:

وَقَوْلُ الزُّورِ

'and bearing false witness',

he continued to repeat it so much that we said: We wish that he would stop speaking."[78]

Imaam Adh-Dhahabee رحمه الله in his work *Al-Kabaair* (The Major Sins) said: The bearer of false witness commits several major sins. These are as follows:

a) He is spreading lies and falsehood. And Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي مَنۡ هُوَ مُسۡرِفٞ كَذَّابٞ﴾

[78] *Bukhaaree* & *Muslim*.

"... Truly, Allaah does not guide anyone who is a *musrif* (one who commit great sins, oppressor, transgressor), a liar..." [*Al-Ghaafir* (40): 28]

b) He was unjust to the person against whom he testified, because it is from his witness, that the person was either deprived of his property, or his honour, or his life.

c) He was unjust to the person in whose favour he testified,, because he made it possible for him to acquire property that does not belong to him, thereby rendering him a sinner.

d) He is unjust to himself, by being the one who bore false witness.

Excessive speech

Another way in which the tongue is misused is by excessive speech. This involves engaging in speech that there is no need to concern oneself with, as well as being excessive in expressing oneself by speaking more than is necessary.

Therefore, in cases where there is need for someone to express oneself, he should stick to the minimum words necessary to express his ideas. To exceed that can be regarded as being excessive. This is a negative attitude although the one who is involved in it would accrue no sins. However, the time spent in repeating what he said could have been spent in saying something good, which would give him a reward in the Hereafter.

'Ataa رحمه الله said: 'Those that were before you (the *Salaf*[79]), used to detest excessive speech. And they considered anything

[79] The righteous predecessors who include the *Sahaabah* (Companions) and the first three generations of Islaam.

as excessive speech except speaking about the Book of Allaah, the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, commanding good and forbidding evil, and speaking about what a man needs to speak because of a need he has to fulfil in his daily life."

Engaging in Vain Talk

Even worst than the above categories, is indulgence in vain talk, since it involves sin. Acts of disobedience, such as men discussing the affairs of women, sitting around with men who are drinking alcohol and mixing with bad company, are common examples of vain talk or deeds. Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ said: "The man with the most mistakes on the Day of Judgment is the one who engages most in vain speech."

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ۝ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ﴾

"Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their prayers with solemnity and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from *Al-Laghw* (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood)..." [*Al-Muminoon* (23):1-3]

He ﷻ also says:

﴿وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ﴾

"And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (the Qur'aan) that when you hear the Verses of Allaah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they

engage in a talk other than that..." [*An-Nisaa'* (4): 140]

And in another *Aayah* it also states:

﴿فِي جَنَّٰتٖ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ○ عَنِ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ○ مَا سَلَكَكُمۡ فِي سَقَرَ ○ قَالُواْ لَمۡ نَكُ مِنَ ٱلۡمُصَلِّينَ ○ وَلَمۡ نَكُ نُطۡعِمُ ٱلۡمِسۡكِينَ ○ وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ ٱلۡخَآئِضِينَ ○ وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ﴾

"(The pious) in Paradise (*Jannah*) will ask one another about the *Mujrimeen* (the guilty ones): "What caused you to enter Hell?" They will say: "We were not of those who used to offer prayers, nor did we feed the poor, and we used to talk falsehood (all that which Allaah hated) with vain talkers, and we used to belie the Day of Judgment." [*Al-Muddaththir* (74): 40-46]

Narrated by Al Mughira bin Shuba ﷺ: The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ:

"Allaah has forbidden for you,

عُقُوقَ الأُمَّهاتِ

1) *to be undutiful to your mothers,*

وَوَأْدَ الْبَنَاتِ

2) *to bury your daughters alive,*

وَمَنْعًا

3) *to not to pay the rights of the others (e.g. charity, etc.)*

and

وَهَاتِ

4) *to beg of men (begging).*

وَكَرِهَ لَكُمْ:

And Allaah has hated for you

قِيلَ وَقَالَ

1) *vain, useless talk, or that you talk too much about others,*

وَكَثْرَةَ السُّؤَالِ

2) *to ask too many questions, (in disputed religious matters)* and

و إضاعة المال

3) *to waste the wealth (by extravagance)."*[80]

[80] *Bukhaaree.*

Prohibitions upon the Tongue

Blasphemy, Insult, Ridicule and Abuse

a) It is prohibited to insult, abuse or blaspheme Allaah ﷻ, His Messenger ﷺ, His *Deen*, and/or His Book. These are all aspects of *Kufr* (disbelief).

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ ۚ قُلْ
أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ○ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ
كَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ﴾

"If you ask them (about this) they declare: 'We were only talking idly and joking.'" Say: "Was it at Allaah, and His *Aayaat* (signs, revelations, etc.,) and His Messenger that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved

after you had believed..." [*At-Tawbah* (9): 65-66]

In the *Tafseer* of Ibn Katheer the following narration is related as the reason for revelation of this *Aayah*. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, Muhammad bin K'ab, Zayd bin Aslam and Qatadaah have all contributed to the establishment of the following *Hadeeth*. In the course of the campaign of Tabuk, a man came up and declared:

"We have seen no people with greater appetites, more lying or more cowardly in battle, than the Prophet of Allaah, and his reciting companions." Aws bin Maalik rose and said: "It is rather you who are the liar, you are a *Munaafiq* pretending to be a Muslim. I shall tell the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ about you."

Aws ﷺ went to the Prophet ﷺ to inform him but found that revelation had already preceded him. (When the news reached) the man, he mounted his camel, sought the Prophet of Allaah ﷺ and said: "...But we were only joking trying to pass the time while travelling." Ibn 'Umar said: "He was clinging to the saddle belt of the Prophet's camel as it ran, his feet and legs being battered by the rough ground, and repeating: but we were only joking... and the Prophet ﷺ insisting, without turning his face to him said:

﴿أَبِاللَّهِ وَءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَرَسُولِهِۦ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ﴾

"Joking! Joking with Allaah? With His Revelation? With His Prophet?

b) It is prohibited to abuse or blaspheme the *Sahaabahs* (the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَعَنَ اللهُ مَنْ سَبَّ أَصْحَابِي

"May Allaah curse the one who abuse or blaspheme my companions."[81]

He also said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابِي فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْفَقَ مِثْلَ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا مَا بَلَغَ مُدَّ أَحَدِهِمْ وَلَا نَصِيفَهُ

"Do not insult/blaspheme my companions, for by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if one of you spend the like of the mountain of Uhud in gold (in Allaah 's way) you would not equal their support, or not even half of their support.'" [82]

It is painful to hear people, who claim that they are Muslims, abuse the noblest of men of this *Ummah*, like Abu Bakr ﷺ, and 'Umar ﷺ or even other *Sahabahs*, like Mua'aawiyah ﷺ.

c) It is prohibited for a Muslim to abuse or blaspheme another Muslim, The Messenger ﷺ said:

سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوقٌ وَقِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ

"Abusing/blaspheming of the Muslim is evil and immoral whilst fighting him is Kufr (disbelief)."[83]

He further states:

[81] *At-Tabaranee, Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadee.*

[82] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[83] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

"The Muslim is he from whom other Muslims are safe from his hand and his tongue."[84]

d) It is prohibited to abuse/blaspheme the dead. The Messenger ﷺ said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا الأَمْوَاتِ

"Do not abuse/blaspheme the dead."[85]

e) It is prohibited to insult/blaspheme what the unbelievers worship other than Allaah.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ﴾

"And insult not those whom they (the disbelievers) worship besides Allaah lest they insult Allaah wrongfully without knowledge." [*Al-An'aam* (6): 108]

Also, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

لَا تُؤْذُوا مُسْلِمًا بِشَتْمِ كَافِرٍ

"Do not cause harm to a Muslim by insulting or abusing a Kafir (disbeliver)."[86]

[84] *Muslim.*

[85] *Bukhaaree.*

[86] *Al-Haakim & Al-Bayhaqee.*

f) The prohibition to abuse the wind.

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا الرِّيحَ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللهِ تَأْتِي بِالرَّحْمَةِ وَالْعَذَابِ وَلَكِنْ سَلُوا اللهَ مِنْ خَيْرِهَا وَتَعَوَّذُوا بِاللهِ مِنْ شَرِّهَا

"Do not abuse/blaspheme the wind because it circulates from Allaah, it brings mercy and punishment. However, ask Allaah for its good, and seek refuge with Allaah from its evil."[87]

g) The prohibition to blaspheme the rooster (cock).

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا الدِّيكَ فَإِنَّهُ يُوقِظُ لِلصَّلَاةِ

"Do not abuse/blaspheme the rooster, because it awakens (people) for prayer."[88]

h) The prohibition to blaspheme time (*Ad-Dahr*)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا الدَّهْرَ

"Do not abuse/blaspheme time..."[89]

i) Do not blaspheme fever.

The Messenger ﷺ entered upon Umm As-Saaib and said to

[87] *Al-Haakim & Ibn Majah.*

[88] *Abu Dawood.*

[89] *Muslim.*

her:

مَالَكِ؟ يَا أُمَّ السَّائِبِ! أَوْ يَا أُمَّ الْمُسَيِّبِ! تُزَفْزِفِينَ؟

"What is the matter with you, O Umm Saaib that you are trembling?"

She said: "Fever, (there is) no blessing of Allaah in it." He said:

لَا تَسُبِّي الْحُمَّى؛ فَإِنَّهَا تُذْهِبُ خَطَايَا بَنِي آدَمَ كَمَا يُذْهِبُ الْكِيرُ خَبَثَ الْحَدِيدِ

"Do not blaspheme fever, because it wipes out the sins of the children of` Adam, as the bellows extract the dirt from iron."[90]

A Shameless, Vulgar And Indecent Tongue

This is not only offensive, but also prohibited. It originates from being malicious, vile, wicked, and reproachful. The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِالطَّعَّانَ وَلَا اللَّعَّانِ وَلَا الْفَاحِشِ وَلَا الْبَذِيءِ

"A believer is not a shameless person, nor one who curses, nor an obscene person nor is he indecent."[91]

It is prohibited for a woman to describe another woman to her husband

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

[90] *Muslim.*

[91] *Tirmidhee & Bayhaqee.*

. . . تَصِفُهَا لِزَوْجِهَا كَأَنَّمَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهَا

"...and she describes her to her husband as if he were looking at her."[92]

This type of description has many dangers; among them is that love for the other woman might enter the husband's heart, and so he starts wishing that he was with the other woman that is described to him, instead.

The Prohibition Of Defaming One's Kin

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

اثْنَتَانِ فِي النَّاسِ هُمَا بِهِمْ كُفْرٌ: الطَّعْنُ فِي النَّسَبِ، وَالنِّيَاحَةُ عَلَى الْمَيِّتِ

"Two types of people from among men have disbelief (Kufr) in them, the defamer of his kin (close family relatives), and the woman who wails and lament over the dead."[93]

It is clear from the above *Hadeeth*, that it is also prohibited for women to wail over the dead.

It is Prohibited to Boast

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللهَ أَوْحَى إِلَيَّ أَنْ تَوَاضَعُوا، حَتَّى لَا يَفْخَرَ أَحَدٌ عَلَى أَحَدٍ، وَلَا يَبْغِي أَحَدٌ عَلَى أَحَدٍ

[92] *Bukhaaree.*

[93] *Muslim.*

"Allaah has revealed to me that you all should be humble, so that no person would oppress another, and neither should there be anyone displaying pride, or boast to another person."[94]

The Prohibition to Speak While The *Imaam* is Giving *Khutbah* on Friday (*Jumu'ah*)

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِذَا قُلْتَ لِصَاحِبِكَ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ أَنْصِتْ وَالإِمَامُ يَخْطُبُ فَقَدْ لَغَوْتَ

"Whoever says 'shut up' to his brother while the Imaam is addressing the people (in the Khutbah) on the Day of Jumu'ah has done an evil act."[95]

In this *Hadeeth* the person who is telling the other to be quiet is actually involved in "commanding good and forbidding evil." However, the gravity of speaking during the *Khutbah*, while the *Imaam* is speaking, is so great, that even this noble act cannot be done.

Abu Ad-Dardaa ﷺ said: "The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ was on the *Minbar*, addressing the people, and he recited a particular *Aayah*. Ubay bin Ka'b was sitting next to me, so I asked him: "When was that *aayah* revealed?" He refused to speak to me, until the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ came down from the *Minbar*, and then he said to me: "You have nothing from the Friday Prayer but your vain speech."

When the Prophet ﷺ had finished, I went to him and informed

[94] *Muslim.*

[95] *Bukhaaree.*

him of what has happened, and he said:

صَدَقَ أَبِي إِذَا سَمِعْتَ إِمَامَكَ يَتَكَلَّمُ فَأَنْصِتْ حَتَّى يَفْرُغَ

"Ubay has spoken the truth, if you hear the Imaam speaking, be quiet until he is finished."[96]

Prohibition to Employ Respectable Titles for Hypocrites And Innovators

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

لَا تَقُولُوا لِلْمُنَافِقِ سَيِّدًا فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ يَكُ سَيِّدًا فَقَدْ أَسْخَطْتُمْ رَبَّكُمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

"Do not address a hypocrite by using respectable titles (like sir, master etc.), for even if he is in such a position, you would have aroused the anger of your Lord, Master of Honour and Glory."[97]

Accusing/Slandering Pious Women (of Adultery)

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ٱلْغَٰفِلَٰتِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ لُعِنُوا۟ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

"Verily, those who accuse chaste women who never ever

[96] *Ahmad* & *Tabaraanee*. The underlined part of the *Hadeeth* is not authentic and stated by Al-Albaanee in *Da'eef At-Targheeb Wa At-Tarheeb*, vol. 1, no. 442.

[97] Abu Dawood.

think of anything touching their chastity, and (who) are good believers, (their accusers) are cursed in this Life and in the Hereafter, and for them will be a great torment." [*An-Noor* (24): 23]

Allaah ﷻ is making it clear in this *Aayah* that anyone who slanders pious women are cursed in this world, and in the Hereafter, they will have a severe torment.

The Messenger ﷺ said:

اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوبِقَاتِ . . . وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ

"Keep away from seven dangerous and destructive sins (and from them is)...slandering pious women (by accusing them of adultery)..."[98]

Also, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَذَفَ مَمْلُوكَهُ وَهُوَ بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا قَالَ؛ جُلِدَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ كَمَا قَالَ

"Whoever accuses what his right hand possesses of adultery will have the judgment established (against him for it) on the Day of Judgment, unless it is as he claimed."[99]

Note: The *Sharee'ah* stipulates that, for the accusation of *Zinaa* (adultery or fornication), that four mature, male witnesses must testify that they all (together) saw the accused in the

[98] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

[99] *Bukhaaree & Muslim.*

actual act itself (i.e. "as a bucket enters into a well" according to the Prophet ﷺ. If the testimony is not as stipulated above (i.e. they have not seen the actual act in itself), but have only seen convincing evidences, or there is three or less witnesses, then their testimonies are rejected.

And Allaah ﷻ stipulates:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا۟ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ فَٱجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَٰنِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا۟ لَهُمْ شَهَٰدَةً أَبَدًا ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ﴾

"And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, hog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever..." [*An-Noor* (24): 4]

Lying Is Another Evil Of The Tongue

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِى ٱلْكَذِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَٰذِبُونَ﴾

"Indeed those who fabricate lies upon Allaah, are only those who disbelieve in His signs, and it is they who are truly liars." [*An-Nahl* (16): 105]

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْذِبُونَ﴾

"A painful torment is theirs because they used to be liars." [*Al-Baqarah* (2): 10]

Ibn Mas`oud ﷺ said that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَصْدُقُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الصِّدْقَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللهِ صِدِّيقًا. وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْكَذِبَ، فَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَكْذِبُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الْكَذِبَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللهَ كَذَّابًا

"Truth guides to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Jannaah and indeed a person would involve in truth until he is written with Allaah as truthful. And lying guides to immorality which guides to Jahannam, and a person would lie until he is written with Allaah as a liar."[100]

From among the characteristic of a hypocrite, described to us by the Prophet ﷺ is that:

إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ

"...when he speaks he lies..."[101]

Hypocrites are the worst of people, because of their evil deeds

[100] *Bukhaaree* & *Muslim*.

[101] Narrated by Abu Hurayrah ؓ: Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا اؤْتُمِنَ خَانَ

"The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; and whenever he promises, he breaks his promise; and whenever he is entrusted, he betrays (proves to be dishonest)." (*Bukhaaree* & *Muslim*)

which involve deception. Consequently, their punishment would be the most severe on the Day of Judgment. So, brothers and sisters, avoid lying at all cost, so as to save yourself from being even considered to be associated with the worst of mankind.

'Aa'ishah ﷺ informing us about the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: "There is no character that is as abhorrent to the Messenger of Allaah as lie. If he is aware of anything of such from anyone, he would not keep it off his mind until he knows that the person has repented."[102]

Situations In Which Lying Is Allowed:

A person is only allowed to lie if it involves the following:

- Making peace between two Muslims.
- Lying to the enemy in battle to protect other Muslims.
- The lying of a man to his wife and a woman to her husband (to keep their relationship harmonious). However, this should not be understood to mean cases of clear lies. Rather, it is the extolling of the virtues of each other, by using pleasant words, although it contains exaggeration. And Allaah knows best.

All of the above are established in the following *Hadeeth* of the Prophet of Allaah ﷺ:

لَا أَعُدُّهُ كَاذِبًا، الرَّجُلُ يُصْلِحُ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ يَقُولُ الْقَوْلَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِهِ إِلَّا الإِصْلَاحَ، وَالرَّجُلُ يَقُولُ فِي الْحَرْبِ، وَالرَّجُلُ يُحَدِّثُ امْرَأَتَهُ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ تُحَدِّثُ زَوْجَهَا

[102] *Ahmad & Al-Haakim.*

"I do not consider it lying: A man who makes peace between other men, a man who speaks in battle, a man speaking to his wife, or a wife speaking to her husband."[103]

Incidents of Lying that are Not Considered by People as Lies

There are many blatant cases of lying, although people do not consider them to be such:

1. Calling a child for something and there is nothing to give him.

'Abdullah ibn 'Aamir ﷺ said: "The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ came to our house while I was a boy, so he 'Abdullaah said: 'I left to go and play. My mother said 'Come 'Abdullaah for me to give you (something).' The Messenger ﷺ said:

مَا أَرَدْتِ أَنْ تُعْطِينَهُ؟

'What will you give to him?'

She said 'I will give him a date." He (Abdullaah) said, that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَمَا إِنَّكِ لَوْ لَمْ تُعْطِيهِ شَيْئًا كُتِبَتْ عَلَيْكِ كَذْبَةٌ

"If you did not have anything to give to him, a lie would have been written against you."[104]

Parents, take heed! Since we want to raise our children upon Islaam, and to train them to be truthful, we must beware of lying

[103] *Abu Dawood.*

[104] *Abu Dawood & Ahmad.*

to them, because that will teach them to lie.

It should be noted that this incident was related by someone who was young when it happened to him. So, children take note of incidents much more than we realize. Therefore, we must not assume that we are playing around and trying to make fun with them, by fooling them.

2. Speaking About Everything We Hear

The Messenger ﷺ said:

كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ كَذِبًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ

"It is enough (to make) a man a liar if he speaks everything he hears."[105]

A person might transfer something that was not verified saying: 'This is what I heard, and I did not add anything to it'. So what would be his end, if what he heard was slander or vilifying of a pious person?

3. Lying To Make Others Laugh

The Messenger ﷺ said:

وَيْلٌ لِلَّذِي يُحَدِّثُ فَيَكْذِبُ لِيُضْحِكَ بِهِ الْقَوْمَ وَيْلٌ لَهُ وَيلٌ لَهُ

"Woe to him who speak and lie so that he can make people laugh - woe to him, woe to him."[106]

Tale Carrying (Scandal) or Strife-Making

[105] *Abu Dawood & Al-Haakim.*

[106] *Ahmad, Abu Dawood* and others.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ○ هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ ○ مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ﴾

"And obey not everyone who swear much and is considered worthless, a slanderer going about scandal-mongering, hinderer of good, transgressor, sinful." [*Al-Qalam* (68): 10-12]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ قَتَّاتٌ

"The tale-carrier (scandal mongerer) would not enter Al-Jannah."[107]

Also, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَلَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ مَا الْعَضَهُ؟ هِيَ النَّمِيمَةُ الْقَالَةُ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

"Do you know what scandaling (carrying tales) is? It is transferring of the speech of someone to another person to cause trouble between them."[108]

However, it should be noted that it is not scandal if a man informs his brother what was said about him, if there would be some benefit from this. Ibn Mas'oud ﷺ said:

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ divided something, so a man from the *Ansaar* said: 'By Allaah! He (i.e. the Prophet ﷺ) did not do that

[107] *Bukhaaree* & *Muslim.*

[108] *Bukhaaree* in *Adab Al-Mufrad.*

seeking the pleasure of Allaah ﷻ (implying that it was unfairly done)'; so I came to the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and informed him. Immediately his face reddened and he said:

رَحِمَ اللهُ مُوسَى قَدْ أُوذِيَ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنْ هَذَا فَصَبَرَ

"Allaah's Mercy be with Moosaa, he was tested with more than this and was patient."[109]

How to Treat the Carrier of Tales

One must verify the tales or stories brought by the carrier of tales, lest he act upon his words, thus harming someone who is innocent.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقُۢ بِنَبَإٖ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓاْ أَن تُصِيبُواْ قَوۡمَۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٖ فَتُصۡبِحُواْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلۡتُمۡ نَٰدِمِينَ﴾

"O you who believe. If a rebellious evil person come to you with a news, verify it - lest you harm a people to ignorance, sad afterwards you become regretful of what you did." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 6]

The tale carrier should be advised, admonished, and even prevented from doing such an evil action. One should also express his hate for tale carrying, by desisting from listening to such a person. In addition to the above, one should not perpetrate the evil of the tale carrier, by entertaining bad thoughts about his brother, or disclosing what was said by the tale carrier.

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[109] *Bukhaaree*.

It is Prohibited to Deceive a Muslim Who is Seeking Sincere Advice

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

وَمَنْ أَشَارَ عَلَى أَخِيهِ بِأَمْرٍ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الرُّشْدَ فِي غَيْرِهِ فَقَدْ خَانَهُ

"...and whoever directs his brother in an affair; but knows that the right guidance is other than that, has deceived him."[110]

Generally, all persons who are directly or indirectly responsible for leading and educating the Muslims, individually (i.e. like one's wife, children, relatives, etc.) or collectively (their *Jama'ah* i.e. like *Masjids*, communities, organizations, etc.) should pay careful attention to this *Hadeeth* and its implications. This is because they are the ones who are most likely to find themselves involved in this serious sin of injustice and misguidance of their brothers and sisters.

This often occurs when such educators/leaders knowing the truth in a given issue or affair, as established from the Qur'aan and the authentic *Sunnah*, deliberately gives a *Fatwaa*, or promote directly or indirectly, the wrong opinion or version of that particular issue. The motivating factors for such deliberate deception of his fellow Muslim/s, who vested their trust in him to lead and guide them correctly, is one or more of the following:

a)*Ittitbaa'ul-Hawaa* (i.e. Following their personal prejudices/ preferences/tastes/desires, etc.)

b) Seeking to acquire or maintain a position of office (either because of fame or money)

c) Political motives (partisanship i.e. to support the operative

[110] *Abu Dawood* & *Al-Haakim.*

view of a particular organization because it appeals to its adherents, or because it appeals to the masses).

This type of deception can also result because of material benefits. For example, someone seeks the advice of his brother in relation to a particular business venture, but his brother likes the idea himself, and then *Shaytaan* influences him to reserve the business for himself, thus he responds to the seeker of the advice against getting into the business, explaining that there is little or no benefit in it. It can also be that he deceives him because he is envious of his brother, and so he withholds what he knows from him.

Mockery, Sarcasm and Debasing Muslims

It is evil enough for a Muslim to misuse his tongue, by indulging in mockery, sarcasm, debasing Muslims, scoffing etc. Mockery is to highlight someone's weaknesses and faults, in such a way that it is laughed at. This could either be by statement, or action. These and other related characteristics, like irony, taunting, scoffing, etc. are all prohibited in Islaam.

Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونُوا۟ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَآءٌ مِّن نِّسَآءٍ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ﴾

"O you who believe! Let not a group mock at another group, it may be that the latter is better than the former, nor let some women mock at other women, it maybe that the latter are better than the former..." [*Al-Hujuraat* (49): 11]

This is because, in most cases, it is used to debase the person that is mocked at. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

بِحَسْبِ امْرِىءٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ

"...It is a serious evil for a Muslim that he should look down upon his brother Muslim..."[111]

Disclosing and Spreading of Secrets

Secrets are meant to be kept. We are forbidden from disclosing and spreading the secrets of people. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِذَا حَدَّثَ الرَّجُلُ بِالْحَدِيثِ ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ فَهِيَ أَمَانَةٌ

"If someone confided something (to another person), then departs, it is a trust."[112]

So, spreading of secrets would thereafter be faithlessness, or betrayal of a trust. If there is harm resulting from this, then this is *Haraam*. If there is no harm, then it is blameworthy because Allaah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ﴾

"Fulfil your trusts..." [*Al-Israa'* (17): 34]

Breaking a trust is a sign of hypocrisy. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَرْبَعٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا . . . إِذَا اؤْتُمِنَ خَانَ

"The signs of hypocrisy are four...(from among them is) if he is entrusted he betrays it..."[113]

[111] *Muslim.*

[112] *Abu Dawood, Ahmad* and others.

[113] *Bukhaaree* & *Muslim.*

Conclusion

May Allaah ﷻ assist us to purify our tongues, and avoid its evil consequences. According to Ibn 'Umar ؓ, the thing that needs the most purification by any person, is his tongue. Let us guard our tongues from these evils, lest our works be destroyed.

Remember the statement of the Prophet ﷺ to Mu`aadh ؓ:

"...then he said:

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِمَلَاكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ

"Shall I not tell you of what controls all that?"

I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, and he took hold of his tongue and said:

كُفَّ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا

"Restrain this."

I said: "O Prophet of Allaah ﷺ, will what we say be held

against us?

He said:

ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ، وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ، أَوْ قَالَ: عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

"May your mother be bereaved for you, O Mu'adh! Is there anything that topples people on their faces – or he said on their noses – into the Hellfire, other than the harvest of their tongues."[114]

And Allaah ﷻ is our Source of help!

[114] *Tirmidhee.*

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